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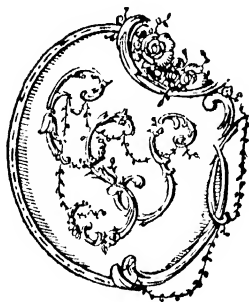
Selected Poems

of

Sidney Lanier

Selected Poems
of
SIDNEY LANIER

With a Preface by
STARK YOUNG



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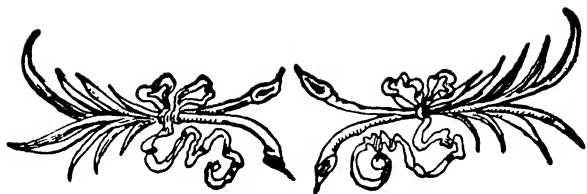
1947

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A



Fashions and fads in poetry as in everything else constantly change; so that what is admired in one generation, or even in one decade, may be quite different from the admiration or theory that went before it. The assumption always is likely to be that the latest is the most modern and therefore the best. This argument of modernity is at times useful and full of meaning; but just as often it is merely a blare of nonsense, or a repetition under different conditions of things already said, an aging brew stirred up all over again for the innocent, the confused or the pretentious.

In the case of Sidney Lanier the opinions of poets, critics and editors have indeed varied. An open heart like his is subject to blows and demolitions, and the musician's full and exuberant mind that possessed him may invite a certain cool, doubting intellectual scorn. The fact remains, nevertheless, that Lanier's appeal refuses to fade under whatever the theories, as they come and go, may be. According to his publishers, who are the best witnesses in such matters, his admirers and devotees continue to evince their appreciation, their love and their demand for copies of his work. Such a selection of his poems as this, therefore, is in its way inevitable. It is based upon

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the complete collection of his poems as first published by Charles Scribner's Sons in 1884, and at various times re-issued, with an introduction by William Hayes Ward which is both factual and critical, and which I have been indeed fortunate to be able to draw upon here.

This volume does not contain all the poems that Lanier wrote, and he would not wish that it should do so; but it does contain all that is admirable by the standards that he studied and maintained. In some instances the poem included is scarcely up to such standards but is still within many a reader's preference, and that must be regarded. And meanwhile it should always be remembered that Lanier was cut off in his prime; and that even before his prime, the conditions in the South after the War Between the States greatly limited what might have been his creative life. "Perhaps you know", he wrote in a letter to Bayard Taylor, "that with us of the younger generation in the South since the war, pretty much the whole of life has been merely not dying." Lanier himself constantly exacted of himself a greater perfection and was steadily moving toward it, if only life and fortune had been less difficult for him and circumstances not so narrow, exigent and fatal.

Poets vary as to the extent to which their lives come directly, as it were, into their works. They vary even more in the extent to which, in the public mind, their lives are interwoven with their work, their work with their lives. Everybody knows the "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard", but few know anything about Thomas Gray. On the other hand most people nowadays know more about Byron than they do about "Sardanapalus" or the last cantos of "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage." And how many people know more, though vaguely, about Shelley's revolutionary ideas or his drowning than they do about

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"Prometheus Unbound" or "Epipsychidion"! The aesthetic principle involved, of course, is that a poem should stand on its own feet, independent of any knowledge on the reader's part concerning the author. That is the test of the poem's excellence. But a man's poetry is so much a part of himself and his life that nobody would ordinarily wish to divorce the two; we all feel that we gain a fuller entrance into the poet's work by knowing what kind of man he was in general and what his life was like. In Lanier's case this is exceptionally true. Nearly all of his readers know of his noble nature and of his brave, tragic, tender and beautiful life. They know too of his very impressive gift for music and practice of it. Without a knowledge of that fact our approach to Lanier's poetry would be greatly hampered, our sense of his quality most inadequate and pinched. And the more we know of him and of his life the better we can judge his achievement and even greater promise.

Sidney Lanier was born on the third of February, 1842, in Macon, Georgia. His father was a lawyer, his mother was Mary Anderson, a Virginian of Scotch descent. Her family had taken a considerable part in Colonial Virginia and the men belonging to it had been distinguished for their gifts in oratory, poetry and music. By one of those happy incidents that sometimes occur in genealogy Lanier's first recorded ancestor of that name was Jerome Lanier, a Huguenot exile attached to the court of Queen Elizabeth. This was evidently in some musical capacity, since we know that his son, Nicholas, was director of music and painting under James I and Charles I, and his grandson had the same position under Charles II, and was, besides, the first Marshall of the Society of Musicians, at that time incorporated. A descendant, Thomas Lanier, came to America in 1716 and

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settled on a grant of land that includes the present city of Richmond.

The first thing to note about Sidney Lanier is his music. When a child he gave evidence of a remarkable gift and passion for that art, and in those first years he played on every instrument that came to hand. With no instruction at all to speak of he played the organ, the piano, the flute, the violin, the guitar and the banjo. His father vetoed the violin, fearing it might carry his boy far afield from what is practical and manly. That was nothing unusual; the inherited Anglo-Saxon tradition did not favor a man's going into the arts. But we are told in various accounts that the violin stayed in Lanier's blood and that the effects he produced subsequently on the flute had the violin's telling quality; people were swept off their feet by something they had never heard in the flute before, something that was haunted by that other voice, the violin—that voice of all voices—and was thus made unbelievably wonderful.

It is highly important here that we get it straight about Lanier as a musician. Music to him was not a mere amateur drive; he was not a mere dabbler or amateur. Asger Hamerick, his director for six years in the Peabody Symphony Orchestra of Baltimore said: "To him as a child in his cradle Music was given: the heavenly gift to feel and to express himself in tones. His human nature was like an enchanted instrument, a magic flute, or the lyre of Apollo, needing but a breath or a touch to send its beauty out into the world. It was indeed irresistible that he should turn with those poetical feelings which transcend language to the penetrating gentleness of the flute or the infinite passion of the violin; for there was an agreement, a spiritual correspondence between his nature and theirs, so that they mutually absorbed and expressed

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each other. In his hands the flute no longer remained a mere material instrument, but was transformed into a voice that set heavenly harmonies into vibration. Its tones developed colors, warmth, and a low sweetness of unspeakable poetry; they were not only true and pure, but poetic, allegoric as it were, suggestive of the depths and heights of being and of the delights which the earthly ear never hears and the earthly eye never sees. No doubt his firm faith in these lofty idealities gave him the power to present them to our imaginations, and thus by the aid of the higher language of Music to inspire others with that sense of beauty in which he constantly dwelt.

"His conception of music was not reached by an analytic study of note by note, but was intuitive and spontaneous. . . . His playing appealed alike to the musically learned and to the unlearned—for he would magnetize the listener: but the artist felt in his performance the superiority of the momentary living inspiration to all the rules and shifts of mere technical scholarship. His art was not only the art of art, but an art above art."

It would be a good thing to read those lines over and well, as coming not from a gushing amateur but from a musician highly professional, and as such jealous of the very commitment of his own recorded criticism.

Music might easily have been the main course of Lanier's life had he not felt, from early youth, that poetry was somehow or other a higher calling for him. The debate between music and poetry as a calling began in his college days. At eighteen he was writing in his notebook that he must find what was God's will with reference to him, what he was best fit for. "I am", he wrote, "more than all perplexed by this fact, that the prime inclination, that is, natural bent, (which I have checked, though) of my nature is to music; and for that I have

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the greatest talent; indeed, not boasting, for God gave it me, I have an extraordinary musical talent, and feel it within me plainly that I could rise as high as any composer. But I cannot bring myself to believe that I was intended for a musician, because it seems so small a business in comparison with other things which, it seems to me, I might do. Question here: What is the province of music in the economy of the world?"

That for a boy of eighteen—and in a distracted South—is very clear indeed, and the same note is repeated in the copybooks later on. In all English poetry I know of no more poignant a discussion than this of such a dilemma. It was indeed such a conflict that Stedman, who was not only a poet of sorts but indisputably one of the leading critics of his time, raised the question as to whether the musician in Lanier did not hamper his development as a poet.

Lanier entered Oglethorpe College at fourteen, lost a year working as a post-office clerk, and was graduated in 1860, at eighteen, with first honors in his class. Upon his graduation he was given a tutorship in the college, which he held until the outbreak of the War Between the States. He enlisted with the Macon Volunteers of the Second Georgia Battalion, the first military organization to go from Georgia to Virginia. He remained a private till the last year of the war, having refused three offers of promotion in order not to be separated from his younger brother, for whom he felt a deep attachment. His leisure moments in camp were occupied with learning French, German and Spanish and with his music. It was toward the end of this period that the tuberculosis began that was to hound him throughout the rest of his life.

Finally the two brothers were separated, each of them being put in charge of a blockade runner. Lanier's

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vessel was taken by the enemy and he spent five months in Point Lookout Prison. Toward the close of the war he was exchanged, and set out on foot for his home in Georgia. He reached home in a state of exhaustion that helped bring on a long and severe illness, and that ended in a serious congestion of one of his lungs. For over a year he held a clerkship in Montgomery, Alabama, and in May, 1867, he went to New York for the first time, to arrange for the publication of his novel, "Tiger Lilies". In the autumn of that year he became the head of a country school in Prattsville, Alabama, and married Mary Day of Macon. Early the next year he suffered his first hemorrhage of the lungs and his long fight for life began in earnest. He returned to Macon, practised law with his father for a time, and then went to San Antonio, hoping to benefit by the Texas climate but in vain. By the end of these uncertain five years he had definitely resolved to devote himself to music and literature. The beginning of 1874 saw him settled in Baltimore, as first flute for the Peabody Symphony Concerts.

His studies and writing were often interrupted by illness, sometimes so grave that he could make no effort of any kind. In the summer of 1874 he wrote "Corn", which was published in Lippincott's Magazine and was widely copied and much admired. He was asked to write a Cantata for the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia, an experiment that, taken with his musical notations, is a distinct success and is presented as such in this selection of his works. This poem may be wisely studied as to the artistic problem involved and the degree of success achieved in terms of that problem. For a poet in such cases is not to be taken as merely stabbing blindly to right and left; he is to be regarded also as a conscious technician working within his craft. The technical salva-

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tion by which he arrives at perfection is at the same time his spirit's reward. He is thus both saint and artisan.

"The Psalm of the West", "The Symphony", "Hymns of the Marshes", "The Song of the Chattahoochee" are among the poems of Lanier's next three or four years. "The Marshes of Glynn" was his most important poem so far. In it we find, transferred to the region of words, the full expression of his great musical gift and his rich—and but partially exploited so far, and for that matter ever—emotional and descriptive powers.

The few remaining years of Lanier's life were busy with his Baltimore lectures in private schools, before literary groups and at Johns Hopkins University. In addition to divers essays, his volume "The Science of English Verse" was the fruit of some of these lectures. This is not the place to discuss the technical content of that work. It is an elaborate discussion of rhythm and tone-color. The emphasis is put not on accent but on time measurement; a line of poetry is conceived of as consisting of a definite number of bars (or feet) as in music, each bar containing a certain number of notes—the iambic foot, for instance, is seen as consisting of one eighth note and one quarter note. Lanier's dream was to discover a scientific basis for the craft of poetry. His ideal of a poet, in fact, is of a man whose natural talent is sustained by wide and exact knowledge. This is a point to be remembered wholesomely and workingly about his mind and work.

After various efforts and localities Lanier and his wife went as a final, desperate resort to Carolina, where they pitched a tent on the slopes of Richmond Hill near Ashville, moving after a time to Polk County. Mrs. Lanier's note on those last days conveys something of the beauty of his spirit and of her spirit and of their relationship. "We are left alone" (August 29, 1881) "with

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one another. On the last night of the summer comes a change. His love and immortal will hold off the destroyer of our summer yet one more week, until the forenoon of September 7th, and then falls the frost, and that unfaltering will renders its supreme submission to the adored will of God."

Lanier's poetry speaks for itself. Thousands have read it and taken it to their hearts. But we can never remember too often the quality of his life and character. In all the records of poets everywhere there is none to be found whose life and character are more beautiful, tender and exalted. This selection of his poems assembles itself, nobly and richly as—to quote Shelley's words—"episodes to that great Poem which all the poets, like the cooperating thoughts of one great mind, have built up since the beginning of the world."

STARK YOUNG

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*Selected Poems of
Sidney Lanier*



HYMNS OF THE MARSHES

I.

SUNRISE

*I*n my sleep I was fain of their fellowship, fain
 Of the live-oak, the marsh, and the main.
 The little green leaves would not let me alone in my
 sleep;
 Up-breathed from the marshes, a message of range and of
 sweep,
 Interwoven with waftures of wild sea-liberties, drifting,
 Came through the lapped leaves sifting, sifting,
 Came to the gates of sleep.
 Then my thoughts, in the dark of the dungeon-keep
 Of the Castle of Captives hid in the City of Sleep,
 Upstarted, by twos and by threes assembling:
 The gates of sleep fell a-trembling
 Like as the lips of a lady that forth falter *yes*,
 Shaken with happiness:
 The gates of sleep stood wide.

I have waked, I have come, my beloved! I might not
 abide :
 I have come ere the dawn, O beloved, my live-oaks, to
 hide
 In your gossiping glooms,—to be

As a lover in heaven, the marsh my marsh and the sea
my sea.

Tell me, sweet burly-bark'd, man-bodied Tree
That mine arms in the dark are embracing, dost know
From what fount are these tears at thy feet which flow ?
They rise not from reason, but deeper inconsequent
deeps.

Reason's not one that weeps.

What logic of greeting lies
Betwixt dear over-beautiful trees and the rain of the
eyes ?

O cunning green leaves, little masters! like as ye gloss
All the dull-tissued dark with your luminous darks that
emboss

The vague blackness of night into pattern and plan,
So,

(But would I could know, but would I could know,)
With your question embroid'ring the dark of the ques-
tion of man,—

So, with your silences purfling this silence of man
While his cry to the dead for some knowledge is under
the ban,

Under the ban,—

So, ye have wrought me
Designs on the night of our knowledge,—yea, ye have
taught me,

So,

That haply we know somewhat more than we know.

Ye lispers, whisperers, singers in storms,
Ye consciences murmuring faiths under forms,
Ye ministers meet for each passion that grieves,
Friendly, sisterly, sweetheart leaves,
Oh, rain me down from your darks that contain me

Wisdoms ye winnow from winds that pain me,—
Sift down tremors of sweet-within-sweet
That advise me of more than they bring,—repeat
Me the woods-smell that swiftly but now brought breath
From the heaven-side bank of the river of death,—
Teach me the terms of silence,—preach me
The passion of patience,—sift me,—impeach me,—
And there, oh there
As ye hang with your myriad palms upturned in the air
Pray me a myriad prayer.

My gossip, the owl,—is it thou
That out of the leaves of the low-hanging bough,
As I pass to the beach, art stirred?
Dumb woods, have ye uttered a bird?

* * * * *

Reverend Marsh, low-couched along the sea,
Old chemist, rapt in alchemy,
Distilling silence,—lo,
That which our father-age had died to know—
The menstruum that dissolves all matter—thou
Hast found it: for this silence, filling now
The globèd clarity of receiving space,
This solves us all: man, matter, doubt, disgrace,
Death, love, sin, sanity,
Must in yon silence' clear solution lie.
Too clear! That crystal nothing who'll peruse?
The blackest night could bring us brighter news.
Yet precious qualities of silence haunt
Round these vast margins, ministrant.
Oh, if thy soul's at latter gasp for space,
With trying to breathe no bigger than thy race
Just to be fellow'd, when that thou hast found
No man with room, or grace enough of bound

To entertain that New thou tell'st, thou art,—
'Tis here, 'tis here thou canst unhand thy heart
And breathe it free, and breathe it free,
By rangy marsh, in lone sea-liberty.

The tide's at full: the marsh with flooded streams
Glimmers, a limpid labyrinth of dreams.
Each winding creek in grave entrancement lies
A rhapsody of morning-stars. The skies
Shine scant with one forked galaxy,—
The marsh brags ten: looped on his breast they lie.

Oh, what if a sound should be made!
Oh, what if a bound should be laid
To this bow-and-string tension of beauty and silence a-
spring,—

To the bend of beauty the bow, or the hold of silence
the string!

I fear me, I fear me yon dome of diaphanous gleam
Will break as a bubble o'er-blown in a dream,—
Yon dome of too-tenuous tissues of space and of night,
Over-weighted with stars, over-freighted with light,
Over-sated with beauty and silence, will seem

But a bubble that broke in a dream,
If a bound of degree to this grace be laid,
Or a sound or a motion made.

But no: it is made: list! somewhere,—mystery, where?
In the leaves? in the air?

In my heart? is a motion made:

'Tis a motion of dawn, like a flicker of shade on shade.

In the leaves 'tis palpable: low multitudinous stirring
Upwinds through the woods; the little ones, softly
conferring,

Have settled my lord's to be looked for; so; they are still;

But the air and my heart and the earth are a-thrill,—
And look where the wild duck sails round the bend of the
river,—

And look where a passionate shiver
Expectant is bending the blades
Of the marsh-grass in serial shimmers and shades,—
And invisible wings, fast fleeting, fast fleeting,
Are beating

The dark overhead as my heart beats,—and steady and
free

Is the ebb-tide flowing from marsh to sea—

(Run home, little streams,
With your lapfulls of stars and dreams),—
And a sailor unseen is hoisting a-peak,
For list, down the inshore curve of the creek

How merrily flutters the sail,—
And lo, in the East! Will the East unveil?
The East is unveiled, the East hath confessed
A flush: 'tis dead; 'tis alive: 'tis dead, ere the West
Was aware of it: nay, 'tis abiding, 'tis unwithdrawn:
Have a care, sweet Heaven! 'Tis Dawn.

Now a dream of a flame through that dream of a flush is
uprolled:

To the zenith ascending, a dome of undazzling gold
Is builded, in shape as a bee-hive, from out of the sea:
The hive is of gold undazzling, but oh, the Bee,
The star-fed Bee, the build-fire Bee,
Of dazzling gold is the great Sun-Bee
That shall flash from the hive-hole over the sea.

Yet now the dew-drop, now the morning gray,
Shall live their little lucid sober day
Ere with the sun their souls exhale away.
Now in each pettiest personal sphere of dew
The summ'd morn shines complete as in the blue

Big dew-drop of all heaven: with these lit shrines
O'er-silvered to the farthest sea-confines,
The sacramental marsh one pious plain
Of worship lies. Peace to the ante-reign
Of Mary Morning, blissful mother mild,
Minded of nought but peace, and of a child.

Not slower than Majesty moves, for a mean and a measure
Of motion,—not faster than dateless Olympian leisure
Might pace with unblown ample garments from pleasure
to pleasure,—

The wave-serrate sea-rim sinks unjarring, unreeling,
Forever revealing, revealing, revealing,
Edgewise, bladewise, halfwise, wholewise,—'tis done!
Good-morrow, lord Sun!

With several voice, with ascription one,
The woods and the marsh and the sea and my soul
Unto thee, whence the glittering stream of all morrows
doth roll,
Cry good and past-good and most heavenly morrow,
lord Sun.

O Artisan born in the purple,—Workman Heat,—
Parter of passionate atoms that travail to meet
And be mixed in the death-cold oneness,—innermost
Guest

At the marriage of elements,—fellow of publicans,—blest
King in the blouse of flame, that loiterest o'er
The idle skies yet laborest fast evermore,—
Thou, in the fine forge-thunder, thou, in the beat
Of the heart of a man, thou Motive,—Laborer Heat:
Yea, Artist, thou, of whose art yon sea's all news,
With his inshore greens and manifold mid-sea blues,
Pearl-glint, shell-tint, ancientest perfectest hues
Ever shaming the maidens,—lily and rose

Confess thee, and each mild flame that glows
In the clarified virginal bosoms of stones that shine,
It is thine, it is thine:

Thou chemist of storms, whether driving the winds
a-swirl
Or a-flicker the subtler essences polar that whirl
In the magnet earth,—yea, thou with a storm for a heart,
Rent with debate, many-spotted with question, part
From part oft sundered, yet ever a globèd light,
Yet ever the artist, ever more large and bright
Than the eye of a man may avail of:—manifold One,
I must pass from thy face, I must pass from the face of
the Sun:

Old Want is awake and agog, every wrinkle a-frown;
The worker must pass to his work in the terrible town:
But I fear not, nay, and I fear not the thing to be done;
I am strong with the strength of my lord the Sun:
How dark, how dark soever the race that must needs be
run,

I am lit with the sun.

Oh, never the mast-high run of the seas
Of traffic shall hide thee,
Never the hell-colored smoke of the factories
Hide thee,
Never the reek of the time's fen-politics
Hide thee,
And ever my heart through the night shall with knowl-
edge abide thee,
And ever by day shall my spirit, as one that hath tried
thee,
Labor, at leisure, in art,—till yonder beside thee
My soul shall float, friend Sun,
The day being done.

II.

INDIVIDUALITY

Sail on, sail on, fair cousin Cloud:
Oh loiter hither from the sea.
 Still-eyed and shadow-brow'd,
Steal off from yon far-drifting crowd,
And come and brood upon the marsh with me.

Yon laboring low horizon-smoke,
Yon stringent sail, toil not for thee
 Nor me; did heaven's stroke
The whole deep with drown'd commerce choke:
No pitiless tease of risk or bottomry

Would to thy rainy office close
Thy will, or lock mine eyes from tears,
 Part wept for traders'-woes,
Part for that ventures mean as those
In issue bind such sovereign hopes and fears.

—Lo, Cloud, thy downward countenance stares
Blank on the blank-faced marsh, and thou
 Mindest of dark affairs;
Thy substance seems a warp of cares;
Like late wounds run the wrinkles on thy brow.

Well may'st thou pause, and gloom, and stare,
A visible conscience: I arraign
 Thee, criminal Cloud, of rare
Contempts on Mercy, Right, and Prayer,—
Of murders, arsons, thefts,—of nameless stain

(Yet though life's logic grow as gray
As thou, my soul's not in eclipse.)

Cold Cloud, but yesterday
Thy lightning slew a child at play,
And then a priest with prayers upon his lips

For his enemies, and then a bright
Lady that did but ope the door
Upon the storming night
To let a beggar in,—strange spite,—
And then thy sulky rain refused to pour

Till thy quick torch a barn had burned
Where twelve months' store of victual lay,
A widow's sons had earned;
Which done, thy floods with winds returned,—
The river raped their little herd away.

What myriad righteous errands high
Thy flames *might* run on! In that hour
Thou slewest the child, oh why
Not rather slay Calamity,
Breeder of Pain and Doubt, infernal Power?

Or why not plunge thy blades about
Some maggot politician throng
Swarming to parcel out
The body of a land, and rout
The maw-conventicle, and ungorge Wrong?

*What the cloud doeth
The Lord knoweth,
The cloud knoweth not.
What the artist doeth,
The Lord knoweth;
Knoweth the artist not?*

Well-answered!—O dear artists, ye
—Whether in forms of curve or hue
Or tone your gospels be—
Say wrong *This work is not of me,*
But God: it is not true, it is not true.

Awful is Art because 'tis free.
The artist trembles o'er his plan
Where men his Self must see.
Who made a song or picture, he
Did it, and not another, God nor man.

My Lord is large, my Lord is strong:
Giving, He gave: my me is mine.
How poor, how strange, how wrong,
To dream He wrote the little song
I made to Him with love's unforced design!

Oh, not as clouds dim laws have plann'd
To strike down Good and fight for Ill,—
Oh, not as harps that stand
In the wind and sound the wind's command:
Each artist—gift of terror!—owns his will.

For thee, Cloud,—if thou spend thine all
Upon the South's o'er-brimming sea
That needs thee not; or crawl
To the dry provinces, and fall
Till every convert clod shall give to thee

Green worship; if thou grow or fade,
Bring on delight or misery,
Fly east or west, be made
Snow, hail, rain, wind, grass, rose, light, shade;
What matters it to thee? There is no thee.

Pass, kinsman Cloud, now fair and mild:
Discharge the will that's not thine own.
 I work in freedom wild,
But work, as plays a little child,
Sure of the Father, Self, and Love, alone.

III.

MARSH SONG—AT SUNSET

O ver the monstrous shambling sea,
Over the Caliban sea,
Bright Ariel-cloud, thou lingerest:
Oh wait, oh wait, in the warm red West,—
Thy Prospero I'll be.

Over the humped and fishy sea,
Over the Caliban sea
O cloud in the West, like a thought in the hear
Of pardon, loose thy wing, and start,
And do a grace for me.

Over the huge and huddling sea,
Over the Caliban sea,
Bring hither my brother Antonio,—Man,—
My injurer: night breaks the ban:
Brother, I pardon thee.

IV.

THE MARSHES OF GLYNN

Glooms of the live-oaks, beautiful-braided and
woven
With intricate shades of the vines that myriad-cloven
Clamber the forks of the multiform boughs,—
Emerald twilights,—
Virginal shy lights,
Wrought of the leaves to allure to the whisper of vows,
When lovers pace timidly down through the green colon-
nades
Of the dim sweet woods, of the dear dark woods,
Of the heavenly woods and glades,
That run to the radiant marginal sand-beach within
The wide sea-marshes of Glynn;—

Beautiful glooms, soft dusks in the noon-day fire,—
Wildwood privacies, closets of lone desire,
Chamber from chamber parted with wavering arras of
leaves,—
Cells for the passionate pleasure of prayer to the soul that
grieves,
Pure with a sense of the passing of saints through the
wood,
Cool for the dutiful weighing of ill with good;—

O braided dusks of the oak and woven shades of the vine,
While the riotous noon-day sun of the June-day long did
shine

Ye held me fast in your heart and I held you fast in mine;
But now when the noon is no more, and riot is rest,
And the sun is a-wait at the ponderous gate of the West,
And the slant yellow beam down the wood-aisle doth
 seem

Like a lane into heaven that leads from a dream,—
Ay, now, when my soul all day hath drunken the soul of
 the oak,

And my heart is at ease from men, and the wearisome
 sound of the stroke

Of the scythe of time and the trowel of trade is low,
And belief overmasters doubt, and I know that I know,
And my spirit is grown to a lordly great compass within,
That the length and the breadth and the sweep of the
 marshes of Glynn

Will work me no fear like the fear they have wrought me
 of yore

When length was fatigue, and when breadth was but
 bitterness sore,

And when terror and shrinking and dreary unnameable
 pain

Drew over me out of the merciless miles of the plain,—

Oh, now, unafraid, I am fain to face

 The vast sweet visage of space.

To the edge of the wood I am drawn, I am drawn,

Where the gray beach glimmering runs, as a belt of the
 dawn,

 For a mete and a mark

 To the forest-dark:—

 So:

Affable live-oak, leaning low,—

Thus—with your favor—soft, with a reverent hand,

(Not lightly touching your person, Lord of the land!)

Bending your beauty aside, with a step I stand

On the firm-packed sand,

Free

By a world of marsh that borders a world of sea.

Sinuous southward and sinuous northward the shimmering band

Of the sand-beach fastens the fringe of the marsh to the folds of the land.

Inward and outward to northward and southward the beach-lines linger and curl

As a silver-wrought garment that clings to and follows the firm sweet limbs of a girl.

Vanishing, swerving, evermore curving again into sight, Softly the sand-beach wavers away to a dim gray looping of light.

And what if behind me to westward the wall of the woods stands high?

The world lies east: how ample, the marsh and the sea and the sky!

A league and a league of marsh-grass, waist-high, broad in the blade,

Green, and all of a height, and unflecked with a light or a shade,

Stretch leisurely off, in a pleasant plain,

To the terminal blue of the main.

Oh, what is abroad in the marsh and the terminal sea?

Somehow my soul seems suddenly free

From the weighing of fate and the sad discussion of sin,

By the length and the breadth and the sweep of the marshes of Glynn.

Ye marshes, how candid and simple and nothing-withholding and free

Ye publish yourselves to the sky and offer yourselves to the sea!

Tolerant plains, that suffer the sea and the rains and the
sun,
Ye spread and span like the catholic man who hath
mightily won
God out of knowledge and good out of infinite pain
And sight out of blindness and purity out of a stain.

As the marsh-hen secretly builds on the watery sod,
Behold I will build me a nest on the greatness of God:
I will fly in the greatness of God as the marsh-hen flies
In the freedom that fills all the space 'twixt the marsh
and the skies:

By so many roots as the marsh-grass sends in the sod
I will heartily lay me a-hold on the greatness of God:
Oh, like to the greatness of God is the greatness within
The range of the marshes, the liberal marshes of Glynn.

And the sea lends large, as the marsh: lo, out of his plenty
the sea

Pours fast: full soon the time of the flood-tide must be:
Look how the grace of the sea doth go
About and about through the intricate channels that flow
Here and there,

Everywhere,

Till his waters have flooded the uttermost creeks and the
low-lying lanes,

And the marsh is meshed with a million veins,
That like as with rosy and silvery essences flow
In the rose-and-silver evening glow.

Farewell, my lord Sun!

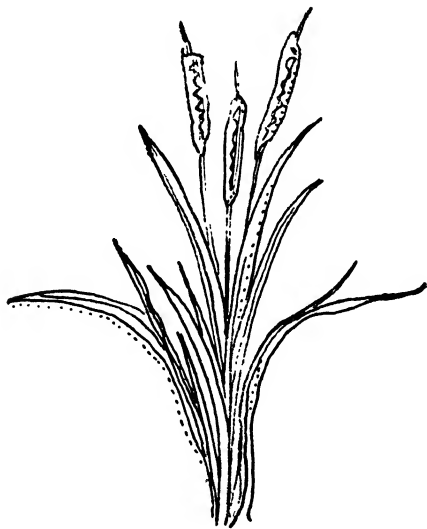
The creeks overflow: a thousand rivulets run
'Twixt the roots of the sod; the blades of the marsh-grass
stir;

Passeth a hurrying sound of wings that westward whirr;

Passeth, and all is still; and the currents cease to run;
And the sea and the marsh are one.

How still the plains of the waters be!
The tide is in his ecstasy.
The tide is at his highest height:
And it is night.

And now from the Vast of the Lord will the waters of
sleep
Roll in on the souls of men,
But who will reveal to our waking ken
The forms that swim and the shapes that creep
Under the waters of sleep?
And I would I could know what swimmeth below when
the tide comes in
On the length and the breadth of the marvellous marshes
of Glynn.



THE WAVING OF THE CORN

*P*loughman, whose gnarly hand yet kindly
wheeled

Thy plough to ring this solitary tree

With clover, whose round plat, reserved a-field,
In cool green radius twice my length may be—

Scanting the corn thy furrows else might yield,
To pleasure August, bees, fair thoughts, and me,
That here come oft together—daily I,

Stretched prone in summer's mortal ecstasy,
Do stir with thanks to thee, as stirs this morn
With waving of the corn.

Unseen, the farmer's boy from round the hill
Whistles a snatch that seeks his soul unsought,
And fills some time with tune, howbeit shrill;
The cricket tells straight on his simple thought—
Nay, 'tis the cricket's way of being still;

The peddler bee drones in, and gossips naught;
Far down the wood, a one-desiring dove
Times me the beating of the heart of love:
And these be all the sounds that mix, each morn,
With waving of the corn.

From here to where the louder passions dwell,
Green leagues of hilly separation roll:

Trade ends where yon far clover ridges swell.
Ye terrible Towns, ne'er claim the trembling soul
That, craftless all to buy or hoard or sell,
From out your deadly complex quarrel stole
To company with large amiable trees,
Suck honey summer with unjealous bees,
And take Time's strokes as softly as this morn
Takes waving of the corn.

SONG OF THE CHATTAHOOCHEE

O ut of the hills of Habersham,
Down the valleys of Hall,
I hurry amain to reach the plain,
Run the rapid and leap the fall,
Split at the rock and together again,
Accept my bed, or narrow or wide,
And flee from folly on every side
With a lover's pain to attain the plain
Far from the hills of Habersham,
Far from the valleys of Hall.

All down the hills of Habersham,
' All through the valleys of Hall,
The rushes cried *Abide, abide*,
The willful waterweeds held me thrall,
The laving laurel turned my tide,
The ferns and the fondling grass said *Stay*.
The dewberry dipped for to work delay,
And the little reeds sighed *Abide, abide*,
Here in the hills of Habersham,
Here in the valleys of Hall.

High o'er the hills of Habersham,
Veiling the valleys of Hall,
The hickory told me manifold
Fair tales of shade, the poplar tall
Wrought me her shadowy self to hold,
The chestnut, the oak, the walnut, the pine,
Overleaning, with flickering meaning and sign,

*Said, Pass not, so cold, these manifold
Deep shades of the hills of Habersham,
These glades in the valleys of Hall.*

And oft in the hills of Habersham,
And oft in the valleys of Hall,
The white quartz shone, and the smooth brook-stone
Did bar me of passage with friendly brawl,
And many a luminous jewel lone
—Crystals clear or a-cloud with mist,
Ruby, garnet and amethyst—
Made lures with the lights of streaming stone
In the clefts of the hills of Habersham,
In the beds of the valleys of Hall.

But oh, not the hills of Habersham,
And oh, not the valleys of Hall
Avail: I am fain for to water the plain.
Downward the voices of Duty call—
Downward, to toil and be mixed with the main,
The dry fields burn, and the mills are to turn,
And a myriad flowers mortally yearn,
And the lordly main from beyond the plain
Calls o'er the hills of Habersham,
Calls through the valleys of Hall.



FROM THE FLATS

What heartache—ne'er a hill
Inexorable, vapid, vague and chill
The drear sand-levels drain my spirit low.
With one poor word they tell me all they know;
Whereat their stupid tongues, to tease my pain,
Do drawl it o'er again and o'er again.
They hurt my heart with griefs I cannot name:
Always the same, the same.

Nature hath no surprise,
No ambuscade of beauty 'gainst mine eyes
From brake or lurking dell or deep defile;
No humors, frolic forms—this mile, that mile;
No rich reserves or happy-valley hopes
Beyond the bend of roads, the distant slopes.
Her fancy fails, her wild is all run tame:
Ever the same, the same.

Oh might I through these tears
But glimpse some hill my Georgia high uprears,
Where white the quartz and pink the pebble shine,
The hickory heavenward strives, the muscadine
Swings o'er the slope, the oak's far-falling shade
Darkens the dogwood in the bottom glade,
And down the hollow from a ferny nook
Bright leaps a living brook!

THE MOCKING BIRD

Superb and sole, upon a pluméd spray
That o'er the general leafage boldly grew,
He summ'd the woods in song; or typic drew
The watch of hungry hawks, the lone dismay
Of languid doves when long their lovers stray,
And all birds' passion-plays that sprinkle dew
At morn in brake or bosky avenue—
Whate'er birds did or dreamed, this bird could say.
Then down he shot, bounced airily along
The sward, twitched in a grasshopper, made song
Midflight, perched, prinked, and to his art again.
Sweet Science, this large riddle read me plain:
How may the death of that dull insect be
The life of yon trim Shakspeare on the tree?



TAMPA ROBINS

*T*he robin laughed in the orange-tree:
“Ho, windy North, a fig for thee:
While breasts are red and wings are bold
And green trees wave us globes of gold,
Time’s scythe shall reap but bliss for me
—Sunlight, song, and the orange-tree.

“Burn, golden globes in leafy sky,
My orange-planets: crimson I
Will shine and shoot among the spheres
(Blithe meteor that no mortal fears)
And thrid the heavenly orange-tree
With orbits bright of minstrelsy.

“If that I hate wild winter’s spite—
The gibbet trees, the world in white,
The sky but gray wind over a grave—
Why should I ache, the season’s slave?
I’ll sing from the top of the orange-tree
Gramercy, winter’s tyranny.

“I’ll south with the sun, and keep my clime;
My wing is king of the summer-time;
My breast to the sun his torch shall hold;
And I’ll call down through the green and gold,
*Time, take thy scythe, reap bliss for me,
Bestir thee under the orange-tree.”*

THE CRYSTAL

*A*t midnight, death's and truth's unlocking time,
When far within the spirit's hearing rolls
The great soft rumble of the course of things—
A bulk of silence in a mask of sound,—
When darkness clears our vision that by day
Is sun-blind, and the soul's a ravening owl
For truth and flitteth here and there about
Low-lying woody tracts of time and oft
Is minded for to sit upon a bough,
Dry-dead and sharp, of some long-stricken tree
And muse in that gaunt place,—'twas then my heart
Deep in the meditative dark, cried out:

“Ye companies of governor-spirits grave,
Bards, and old bringers-down of flaming news
From steep-wall'd heavens, holy malcontents,
Sweet seers, and stellar visionaries, all
That brood about the skies of poesy,
Full bright ye shine, insuperable stars;
Yet, if a man look hard upon you, none
With total lustre blazeth, no, not one
But hath some heinous freckle of the flesh
Upon his shining cheek, not one but winks
His ray, opaqued with intermittent mist
Of defect; yea, you masters all must ask
Some sweet forgiveness, which we leap to give,
We lovers of you, heavenly-glad to meet
Your largesse so with love, and interplight
Your geniuses with our mortalities.

Thus unto thee, O sweetest Shakspeare sole,
A hundred hurts a day I do forgive
('Tis little, but, enchantment! 'tis for thee):
Small curious quibble; Juliet's prurient pun
In the poor, pale face of Romeo's fancied death;
Cold rant of Richard; Henry's fustian roar
Which frights away that sleep he invokes;
Wronged Valentine's unnatural haste to yield;
Too-silly shifts of maids that mask as men
In faint disguises that could ne'er disguise—
Viola, Julia, Portia, Rosalind;
Fatigues most drear, and needless overtax
Of speech obscure that had as lief be plain;
Last I forgive (with more delight, because
'Tis more to do) the labored-lewd discourse
That e'en thy young invention's youngest heir
Besmirched the world with.

Father Homer, thee,

Thee also I forgive thy sandy wastes
Of prose and catalogue, thy drear harangues
That tease the patience of the centuries,
Thy sleazy scrap of story,—but a rogue's
Rape of a light-o'-love,—too soiled a patch
To broider with the gods.

Thee, Socrates,

Thou dear and very strong one, I forgive
Thy year-worn cloak, thine iron stringencies
That were but dandy upside-down, thy words
Of truth that, milder, spoke, had manlier wrought.

So, Buddha, beautiful I pardon thee
That all the All thou had'st for needy man
Was Nothing, and thy Best of being was
But not to be.

Worn Dante, I forgive
The implacable hates that in thy horrid hells
Or burn or freeze thy fellows, never loosed
By death, nor time, nor love.

And I forgive
Thee, Milton, those thy comic-dreadful wars
Where, armed with gross and inconclusive steel,
Immortals smite immortals mortalwise
And fill all heaven with folly.

Also thee,
Brave Æschylus, thee I forgive, for that
Thine eye, by bare bright justice basilisk'd,
Turned not, nor ever learned to look where Love
Stands shining.

So, unto thee, Lucretius mine
(For oh, what heart hath loved thee like to this
That's now complaining?), freely I forgive
Thy logic poor, thine error rich, thine earth
Whose graves eat souls and all.

Yea, all you hearts
Of beauty, and sweet righteous lovers large:
Aurelius fine, oft superfine; mild Saint
A Kempis, overmild; Epictetus,
Whiles low in thought, still with old slavery tinct;
Rapt Behmen, rapt too far; high Swedenborg,
O'ertoppling; Langley, that with but a touch
Of art hadst sung Piers Plowman to the top
Of English songs, whereof 'tis dearest now,
And most adorable; Cædmon, in the morn
A-calling angels with the cow-herd's call
That late brought up the cattle; Emerson,

Most wise, that yet, in finding Wisdom, lost
Thy Self, sometimes; tense Keats, with angels' nerves
Where men's were better; Tennyson, largest voice
Since Milton, yet some register of wit
Wanting;—all, all, I pardon, ere 'tis asked,
Your more or less, your little mole that marks
You brother and your kinship seals to man.

But Thee, but Thee, O sovereign Seer of time,
But Thee, O poets' Poet, Wisdom's Tongue,
But Thee, O man's best Man, O love's best Love,
O perfect life in perfect labor writ,
O all men's Comrade, Servant, King, or Priest,—
What *if* or *yet*, what mole, what flaw, what lapse,
What least defect or shadow of defect,
What rumor, tattled by an enemy,
Of inference loose, what moment's lack of grace
Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's, or death's,—
Oh, what amiss may I forgive in Thee,
Jesus, good Paragon, thou Crystal Christ?"



TO BAYARD TAYLOR

To range, deep-wrapt, along a heavenly height,
O'erseeing all that man but undersees;
To loiter down lone alleys of delight,
And hear the beating of the hearts of trees,
And think the thoughts that lilies speak in white
By greenwood pools and pleasant passages;

With healthy dreams a-dream in flesh and soul,
To pace, in mighty meditations drawn,
From out the forest to the open knoll
Where much thyme is, whence blissful leagues of lawn
Betwixt the fringing woods to southward roll
By tender inclinations; mad with dawn,

Ablaze with fires that flame in silver dew
When each small globe doth glass the morning-star,
Long ere the sun, sweet-smitten through and through
With dappled revelations read afar,
Suffused with saintly ecstasies of blue
As all the holy eastern heavens are,—

To fare thus fervid to what daily toil
Employs thy spirit in that larger Land
Where thou art gone; to strive, but not to moil
In nothings that do mar the artist's hand,
Not drudge unriched, as grain rots back to soil,—
No profit out of death,—going, yet still at stand,—

Giving what life is here in hand to-day
For that that's in to-morrow's bush, perchance,—
Of this year's harvest none in the barn to lay,

All sowed for next year's crop,—a dull advance
In curves that come but by another way
Back to the start,—a thriftless thrift of ants

Whose winter wastes their summer; O my Friend,
Freely to range, to muse, to toil, is thine:
Thine, now, to watch with Homer sails that bend
Unstained by Helen's beauty o'er the brine
Towards some clean Troy no Hector need defend
Nor flame devour; or, in some mild moon's shine

Where amiabler winds the whistle heed,
To sail with Shelley o'er a bluer sea,
And mark Prometheus, from his fetters freed,
Pass with Deucalion over Italy,
While bursts the flame from out his eager reed
Wild-stretching towards the West of destiny;

Or, prone with Plato, Shakspeare and a throng
Of bards beneath some plane-tree's cool eclipse,
To gaze on glowing meads where, lingering long,
Psyche's large Butterfly her honey sips;
Or, mingling free in choirs of German song,
To learn of Goethe's life from Goethe's lips;

These, these are thine, and we, who still are dead,
Do yearn—nay, not to kill thee back again
Into this charnel life, this lowlihead,
Not to the dark of sense, the blinking brain,
The hugged delusion drear, the hunger fed
On husks of guess, the monarchy of pain,

The cross of love, the wrench of faith, the shame
Of science that cannot prove proof is, the twist
Of blame for praise and bitter praise for blame,

The silly stake and tether round the wrist
By fashion fixed, the virtue that doth claim
The gains of vice, the lofty mark that's missed

By all the mortal space 'twixt heaven and hell,
The soul's sad growth o'er stationary friends
Who hear us from our height not well, not well,
The slant of accident, the sudden bends
Of purpose tempered strong, the gambler's spell,
The son's disgrace, the plan that e'er depends

On others' plots, the tricks that passion plays
(I loving you, you him, he none at all),
The artist's pain—to walk his blood-stained ways,
A special soul, yet judged as general—
The endless grief of art, the sneer that slays,
The war, the wound, the groan, the funeral pall—

Not into these, bright spirit, do we yearn
To bring thee back, but oh, to be, to be
Unbound of all these gyves, to stretch, to spurn
The dark from off our dolorous lids, to see
Our spark, Conjecture, blaze and sunwise burn,
And suddenly to stand again by thee!

Ah, not for us, not yet, by thee to stand:
For us, the fret, the dark, the thorn, the chill;
For us, to call across unto thy Land,
"Friend, get thee to the minstrels' holy hill,
And kiss those brethren for us, mouth and hand,
And make our duty to our master Will."

A DEDICATION

TO CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN

*A*s Love will carve dear names upon a tree,
Symbol of gravure on his heart to be,

So thought I thine with loving text to set
In the growth and substance of my canzonet;

But, writing it, my tears begin to fall—
This wild-rose stem for thy large name's too small!

Nay, still my trembling hands are fain, are fain
Cut the good letters though they lap again;

Perchance such folk as mark the blur and stain
Will say, *It was the beating of the rain;*

Or, haply these o'er-woundings of the stem
May loose some little balm, to plead for them.

TO CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN

*L*ook where a three-point star shall weave his beam
Into the slumb'rous tissue of some stream,
Till his bright self o'er his bright copy seem
Fulfillment dropping on a come-true dream;
So in this night of art thy soul doth show
Her excellent double in the steadfast flow
Of wishing love that through men's hearts doth go:
At once thou shin'st above and shin'st below.
E'en when thou strivest there within Art's sky
(Each star must o'er a strenuous orbit fly),
Full calm thine image in our love doth lie,
A Motion glassed in a Tranquillity.
So triple-rayed, thou mov'st, yet stay'st, serene—
Art's artist, Love's dear woman, Fame's good queen!

THE STIRRUP-CUP

*D*eath, thou'rt a cordial old and rare:
Look, how compounded, with what care!
Time got his wrinkles reaping thee
Sweet herbs from all antiquity.

David to thy distillage went,
Keats, and Gotama excellent,
Omar Khayyam, and Chaucer bright,
And Shakspeare for a king-delight.

Then, Time, let not a drop be spilt:
Hand me the cup whene'er thou wilt:
'Tis thy rich stirrup-cup to me;
I'll drink it down right smilingly.

A SONG OF ETERNITY IN TIME

Once, at night, in the manor wood
My Love and I long silent stood,
Amazed that any heavens could
Decree to part us, bitterly repining.
My Love, in aimless love and grief,
Reached forth and drew aside a leaf
That just above us played the thief
And stole our starlight that for us was shining.

A star that had remarked her pain
Shone straightway down that leafy lane,
And wrought his image, mirror-plain,
Within a tear that on her lash hung gleaming.
“Thus Time,” I cried, “is but a tear
Some one hath wept ’twixt hope and fear,
Yet in his little lucent sphere
Our star of stars, Eternity, is beaming.”

OWLE AGAINST ROBIN

*F*rowning, the owl in the oak complained him
Sore, that the song of the robin restrained him
Wrongly of slumber, rudely of rest.
“From the north, from the east, from the south and the
west,
Woodland, wheat-field, corn-field, clover,
Over and over and over and over,
Five o'clock, ten o'clock, twelve, or seven,
Nothing but robin-songs heard under heaven:
How can we sleep?

Peep! you whistle, and *cheep! cheep! cheep!*
Oh, peep, if you will, and buy, if 'tis cheap,
And have done; for an owl must sleep.
Are ye singing for fame, and who shall be first?
Each day's the same, yet the last is worst,
And the summer is cursed with the silly outburst
Of idiot red-breasts peeping and cheeping
By day, when all honest birds ought to be sleeping.
Lord, what a din! And so out of all reason.
Have ye not heard that each thing hath its season?
Night is to work in, night is for play-time;
Good heavens, not day-time!

A vulgar flaunt is the flaring day,
The impudent, hot, unsparing day,
That leaves not a stain nor a secret untold,—
Day the reporter,—the gossip of old,—
Deformity's tease,—man's common scold—

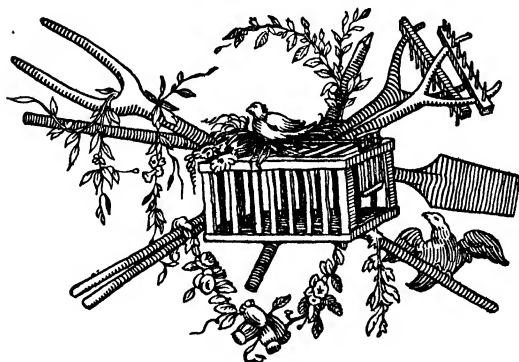
Pohl! Shut the eyes, let the sense go numb
When day down the eastern way has come.
'Tis clear as the moon (by the argument drawn
From Design) that the world should retire at dawn.
Day kills. The leaf and the laborer breathe
Death in the sun, the cities seethe,
The mortal black marshes bubble with heat
And puff up pestilence; nothing is sweet
Has to do with the sun: even virtue will taint
(Philosophers say) and manhood grow faint
In the lands where the villainous sun has sway
Through the livelong drag of the dreadful day.
What Eden but noon-light stares it tame,
Shadowless, brazen, forsaken of shame?
For the sun tells lies on the landscape,—now
Reports me the *what*, unrelieved with the *how*,—
As messengers lie, with the facts alone,
Delivering the word and withholding the tone.

But oh, the sweetness, and oh, the light
Of the high-fastidious night!
Oh, to awake with the wise old stars—
The cultured, the careful, the Chesterfield stars,
That wink at the work-a-day fact of crime
And shine so rich through the ruins of time
That Baalbec is finer than London; oh,
To sit on the bough that zigzags low
 By the woodland pool,
And loudly laugh at man, the fool
That vows to the vulgar sun; oh, rare,
To wheel from the wood to the window where
A day-worn sleeper is dreaming of care,
And perch on the sill and straightly stare
Through his visions; rare, to sail
Aslant with the hill and a-curve with the vale,—

To flit down the shadow-shot-with-gleam,
Betwixt hanging leaves and starlit stream,
Hither, thither, to and fro,
Silent, aimless, dayless, slow—
(*Aimless? Field-mice?* True, they're slain,
But the night-philosophy hoots at pain,
Grips, eats quick, and drops the bones
In the water beneath the bough, nor moans
At the death life feeds on). Robin, pray
Come away, come away
To the cultus of night. Abandon the day.
Have more to think and have less to say.
And *cannot* you walk now? Bah! don't hop!
Stop!
Look at the owl, scarce seen, scarce heard,
O irritant, iterant, maddening bird! ”

A SONG OF THE FUTURE

Sail fast, sail fast,
Ark of my hopes, Ark of my dreams;
Sweep lordly o'er the drownèd Past,
Fly glittering through the sun's strange beams;
Sail fast, sail fast.
Breaths of new buds from off some drying lea
With news about the Future scent the sea:
My brain is beating like the heart of Haste;
I'll loose me a bird upon this Present waste;
Go, trembling song,
And stay not long; oh, stay not long:
Thou 'rt only a gray and sober dove,
But thine eye is faith and thy wing is love.



OPPOSITION



f fret, of dark, of thorn, of chill,
Complain no more; for these, O heart,
Direct the random of the will
As rhymes direct the rage of art.

The lute's fixt fret, that runs athwart
The strain and purpose of the string,
For governance and nice consort
Doth bar his wilful wavering.

The dark hath many dear avails;
The dark distils divinest dewes;
The dark is rich with nightingales,
With dreams, and with the heavenly Muse.

Bleeding with thorns of petty strife,
I'll ease (as lovers do) my smart
With sonnets to my lady Life,
Writ red in issues from the heart.

What grace may lie within the chill
Of favor frozen fast in scorn!
When Good's a-freeze, we call it Ill!
This rosy Time is glacier-born.

Of fret, of dark, of thorn, of chill,
Complain thou not, O heart; for these
Bank-in the current of the will
To uses, arts, and charities.

ROSE-MORALS

I.—RED

Would that my songs might be
What roses make by day and night—
Distillments of my clod of misery
Into delight.

Soul, could'st thou bare thy breast
As yon red rose, and dare the day,
All clean, and large, and calm with velvet rest?
Say yea—say yea!

Ah, dear my Rose, good-bye;
The wind is up; so; drift away.
That songs from me as leaves from thee may fly,
I strive, I pray.

II.—WHITE

Soul, get thee to the heart
Of yonder tuberose: hide thee there—
There breathe the meditations of thine art,
Suffused with prayer.

Of spirit grave yet light,
How fervent fragrances uprise
Pure-born from these most rich and yet most white
Virginities!

Mulched with unsavory death,
Grow, Soul! unto such white estate,
That virginal-prayerful art shall be thy breath,
Thy work, thy fate.

CORN

*T*o-day the woods are trembling through and through
With shimmering forms, that flash before my view,
Then melt in green as dawn-stars melt in blue.

The leaves that wave against my cheek caress
Like women's hands; the embracing boughs express

A subtlety of mighty tenderness;
The copse-depths into little noises start,
That sound anon like beatings of a heart,
Anon like talk 'twixt lips not far apart.
The beech dreams balm, as a dreamer hums a song;
Through that vague wafture, expirations strong
Throb from young hickories breathing deep and long
With stress and urgency bold of prisoned spring
And ecstasy of burgeoning.

Now, since the dew-plashed road of morn is dry,
Forth venture odors of more quality
And heavenlier giving. Like Jove's locks awry,
Long muscadines

Rich-wreathe the spacious foreheads of great pines,
And breathe ambrosial passion from their vines.

I pray with mosses, ferns and flowers shy
That hide like gentle nuns from human eye
To lift adoring perfumes to the sky.

I hear faint bridal-sighs of brown and green
Dying to silent hints of kisses keen
As far lights fringe into a pleasant sheen.

I start at fragmentary whispers, blown
From undertalks of leafy souls unknown,
Vague purports sweet, of inarticulate tone.

Dreaming of gods, men, nuns and brides, between

Old companies of oaks that inward lean
To join their radiant amplitudes of green
 I slowly move, with ranging looks that pass
 Up from the matted miracles of grass
Into yon veined complex of space
Where sky and leafage interlace
 So close, the heaven of blue is seen
 Inwoven with a heaven of green.

I wander to the zigzag-cornered fence
Where sassafras, intrenched in brambles dense,
Contests with stolid vehemence
 The march of culture, setting limb and thorn
 As pikes against the army of the corn.

There, while I pause, my fieldward-faring eyes
Take harvests, where the stately corn-ranks rise,
 Of inward dignities
And large benignities and insights wise,
 Graces and modest majesties.
Thus, without theft, I reap another's field;
Thus, without tilth, I house a wondrous yield,
And heap my heart with quintuple crops concealed.

Look, out of line one tall corn-captain stands
Advanced beyond the foremost of his bands,
 And waves his blades upon the very edge
 And hottest thicket of the battling hedge.
Thou lustrous stalk, that ne'er may'st walk nor talk,
 Still shalt thou type the poet-soul sublime
 That leads the vanward of his timid time
 And sings up cowards with commanding rhyme—
Soul calm, like thee, yet fain, like thee, to grow
By double increment, above, below;
 Soul homely, as thou art, yet rich in grace like thee,

Teaching the yeomen selfless chivalry
That moves in gentle curves of courtesy;
Soul filled like thy long veins with sweetness tense,
By every godlike sense
Transmuted from the four wild elements.

Drawn to high plans,
Thou lift'st more stature than a mortal man's,
Yet ever piercest downward in the mould
And keepest hold
Upon the reverend and steadfast earth
That gave thee birth;
Yea, standest smiling in thy future grave,
Serene and brave,
With unremitting breath
Inhaling life from death,
Thine epitaph writ fair in fruitage eloquent,
Thyself thy monument.

As poets should,
Thou hast built up thy hardihoo
With universal food,
Drawn in select proportion fair
From honest mould and vagabond air;
From darkness of the dreadful night,
And joyful light;
From antique ashes, whose departed flame
In thee has finer life and longer fame;
From wounds and balms,
From storms and calms,
From potsherds and dry bones
And ruin-stones.
Into thy vigorous substance thou hast wrought
Whate'er the hand of Circumstance hath brought;
Yea, into cool solacing green hast spun

White radiance hot from out the sun.
So thou dost mutually leaven
Strength of earth with grace of heaven;
 So thou dost marry new and old
 Into a one of higher mould;
 So thou dost reconcile the hot and cold,
 The dark and bright,
And many a heart-perplexing opposite,
 And so,
 Akin by blood to high and low,
Fifty thou playest out thy poet's part,
Richly expending thy much-bruised heart
 In equal care to nourish lord in hall
 Or beast in stall:
Thou took'st from all that thou might'st give to all.

O steadfast dweller on the selfsame spot
Where thou wast born, that still repinest not—
Type of the home-fond heart, the happy lot!—
 Deeply thy mild content rebukes the land
 Whose flimsy homes, built on the shifting sand
Of trade, for ever rise and fall
With alternation whimsical,
 Enduring scarce a day,
 Then swept away
By swift engulfments of incalculable tides
Whereon capricious Commerce rides.
Look, thou substantial spirit of content!
Across this little vale, thy continent,
 To where, beyond the mouldering mill,
 Yon old deserted Georgian hill
Bares to the sun his piteous aged crest
 And seamy breast,
By restless-hearted children left to lie
Untended there beneath the heedless sky,

As barbarous folk expose their old to die.
Upon that generous-rounding side,
 With gullies scarified
Where keen Neglect his lash hath plied,
Dwelt one I knew of old, who played at toil,
And gave to coquette Cotton soul and soil.
Scorning the slow reward of patient grain,
He sowed his heart with hopes of swifter gain,
Then sat him down and waited for the rain.
He sailed in borrowed ships of usury—
A foolish Jason on a treacherous sea,
Seeking the Fleece and finding misery.
 Lulled by smooth-rippling loans, in idle trance
 He lay, content that unthrift Circumstance
 Should plough for him the stony field of Chance.
Yea, gathering crops whose worth no man might tell,
He staked his life on games of Buy-and-Sell,
And turned each field into a gambler's hell.
 Ay, as each year began,
 My farmer to the neighboring city ran;
Passed with a mournful anxious face
Into the banker's inner place;
Parleyed, excused, pleaded for longer grace;
 Railed at the drought, the worm, the rust, the grass;
 Protested ne'er again 'twould come to pass;
 With many an *oh* and *if* and *but alas*
Parried or swallowed searching questions rude,
And kissed the dust to soften Dives' mood.
At last, small loans by pledges great renewed,
 He issues smiling from the fatal door,
 And buys with lavish hand his yearly store
 Till his small borrowings will yield no more.
Ay, as each year declined,
With bitter heart and ever-brooding mind
He mourned his fate unkind.
 In dust, in rain, with might and main,

He nursed his cotton, cursed his grain,
Fretted for news that made him fret again,
Snatched at each telegram of Future Sale,
And thrilled with Bulls' or Bears' alternate wail—
In hope or fear alike for ever pale.

And thus from year to year, through hope and fear,
With many a curse and many a secret tear,
Striving in vain his cloud of debt to clear,

At last

He woke to find his foolish dreaming past,
And all his best-of-life the easy prey
Of squandering scamps and quacks that lined his way

With vile array,

From rascal statesman down to petty knave;
Himself, at best, for all his bragging brave,
A gamester's catpaw and a banker's slave.

Then, worn and gray, and sick with deep unrest,
He fled away into the oblivious West,

Unmourned, unblest.

Old hill! old hill! thou gashed and hairy Lear
Whom the divine Cordelia of the year,
E'en pitying Spring, will vainly strive to cheer—
King, that no subject man nor beast may own,
Discrowned, undaughtered and alone—
Yet shall the great God turn thy fate,
And bring thee back into thy monarch state

And majesty immaculate.

Lo, through hot waverings of the August morn,
Thou givest from thy vasty sides forlorn
Visions of golden treasures of corn—
Ripe largesse lingering for some bolder heart
That manfully shall take thy part,

And tend thee,

And defend thee,

With antique sinew and with modern art.

THE SYMPHONY

“O Trade! O Trade! would thou wert dead!
The Time needs heart—’tis tired of head:
We’re all for love,” the violins said.
“Of what avail the rigorous tale
Of bill for coin and box for bale?
Grant thee, O Trade! thine uttermost hope:
Level red gold with blue sky-slope,
And base it deep as devils grope:
When all’s done, what hast thou won
Of the only sweet that’s under the sun?
Ay, canst thou buy a single sigh
Of true love’s least, least ecstasy?”
Then, with a bridegroom’s heart-beats trembling,
All the mightier strings assembling
Ranged them on the violins’ side
As when the bridegroom leads the bride,
And, heart in voice, together cried:
“Yea, what avail the endless tale
Of gain by cunning and plus by sale?
Look up the land, look down the land,
The poor, the poor, the poor, they stand
Wedged by the pressing of Trade’s hand
Against an inward-opening door
That pressure tightens evermore:
They sigh a monstrous foul-air sigh
For the outside leagues of liberty,
Where Art, sweet lark, translates the sky
Into a heavenly melody.
‘Each day, all day’ (these poor folks say),
‘In the same old year-long, drear-long way,

We weave in the mills and heave in the kilns,
We sieve mine-meshes under the hills,
And thieve much gold from the Devil's bank tills,
To relieve, O God, what manner of ills?—
The beasts, they hunger, and eat, and die;
And so do we, and the world's a sty;
Hush, fellow-swine: why nuzzle and cry?
Swinehood hath no remedy
Say many men, and hasten by,
Clamping the nose and blinking the eye.
But who said once, in the lordly tone,
Man shall not live by bread alone
But all that cometh from the Throne?

Hath God said so?

But Trade saith *No*:

And the kilns and the curt-tongued mills say *Go*:
There's plenty that can, if you can't: we know.
Move out, if you think you're underpaid.
The poor are prolific; we're not afraid;
Trade is trade.'"

Thereat this passionate protesting
Meekly changed, and softened till
It sank to sad requesting
And suggesting sadder still:
"And oh, if men might some time see
How piteous-false the poor decree
That trade no more than trade must be!
Does business mean, *Die, you—live, I?*
Then 'Trade is trade' but sings a lie:
'Tis only war grown miserly.
If business is battle, name it so:
War-crimes less will shame it so,
And widows less will blame it so.
Alas, for the poor to have some part
In yon sweet living lands of Art,

Makes problem not for head, but heart.
Vainly might Plato's brain revolve it:
Plainly the heart of a child could solve it."

And then, as when from words that seem but rude
We pass to silent pain that sits abroad
Back in our heart's great dark and solitude,
So sank the strings to gentle throbbing
Of long chords change-marked with sobbing—
Motherly sobbing, not distinctlier heard
Than half wing-openings of the sleeping bird,
Some dream of danger to her young hath stirred.
Then stirring and demurring ceased, and lo!
Every least ripple of the strings' song-flow
Died to a level with each level bow
And made a great chord tranquil-surfaced so,
As a brook beneath his curving bank doth go
To linger in the sacred dark and green
Where many boughs the still pool overlean
And many leaves make shadow with their sheen.

But presently
A velvet flute-note fell down pleasantly
Upon the bosom of that harmony,
And sailed and sailed incessantly,
As if a petal from a wild-rose blown
Had fluttered down upon that pool of tone
And boatwise dropped o' the convex side
And floated down the glassy tide
And clarified and glorified
The solemn spaces where the shadows bide.
From the warm concave of that fluted note
Somewhat, half song, half odor, forth did float,
As if a rose might somehow be a throat:
When Nature from her far-off glen
Flutes her soft messages to men,

The flute can say them o'er again;
Yea, Nature, singing sweet and lone,
Breathes through life's strident polyphone
The flute-voice in the world of tone.

Sweet friends,
Man's love ascends
To finer and diviner ends
Than man's mere thought e'er comprehends,
For I, e'en I,
As here I lie,
A petal on a harmony,
Demand of Science whence and why
Man's tender pain, man's inward cry,
When he doth gaze on earth and sky?
I am not overbold:

I hold
Full powers from Nature manifold.
I speak for each no-tongued tree
That, spring by spring, doth nobler be,
And dumbly and most wistfully
His mighty prayerful arms outspreads
Above men's oft-unheeding heads,
And his big blessing downward sheds.
I speak for all-shaped blooms and leaves,
Lichens on stones and moss on eaves,
Grasses and grains in ranks and sheaves;
Broad-fronded ferns and keen-leaved canes,
And briery mazes bounding lanes,
And marsh-plants, thirsty-cupped for rains,
And milky stems and sugary veins;
For every long-armed woman-vine
That round a piteous tree doth twine;
For passionate odors, and divine
Pistils, and petals crystalline;
All purities of shady springs,

All shynesses of film-winged things
That fly from tree-trunks and bark-rings;
All modesties of mountain-fawns
That leap to covert from wild lawns,
And tremble if the day but dawns;
All sparklings of small beady eyes
Of birds, and sidelong glances wise
Wherewith the jay hints tragedies;
All piquancies of prickly burs,
And smoothnesses of downs and furs
Of eiders and of minevers;
All limpid honeys that do lie
At stamen-bases, nor deny
The humming-birds' fine roguery,
Bee-thighs, nor any butterfly;
All gracious curves of slender wings,
Bark-mottlings, fibre-spiralings,
Fern-wavings and leaf-flickerings;
Each dial-marked leaf and flower-bell
Wherewith in every lonesome dell
Time to himself his hours doth tell;
All tree-sounds, rustlings of pine-cones,
Wind-sighings, doves' melodious moans,
And night's unearthly under-tones;
All placid lakes and waveless deeps,
All cool reposing mountain-steeps,
Vale-calms and tranquil lotos-sleeps;—
Yea, all fair forms, and sounds, and lights,
And warmths, and mysteries, and mights,
Of Nature's utmost depths and heights,
—These doth my timid tongue present,
Their mouthpiece and leal instrument
And servant, all love-eloquent.
I heard, when '*All for love*' the violins cried:
So, Nature calls through all her system wide,

Give me thy love, O man, so long denied.

Much time is run, and man hath changed his ways,
Since Nature, in the antique fable-days,
Was hid from man's true love by proxy fays,
False fauns and rascal gods that stole her praise.
The nymphs, cold creatures of man's colder brain,
Chilled Nature's streams till man's warm heart was fain
Never to lave its love in them again.

Later, a sweet Voice *Love thy neighbor* said;
Then first the bounds of neighborhood outspread
Beyond all confines of old ethnic dread.

Vainly the Jew might wag his covenant head:
'*All men are neighbors,*' so the sweet Voice said.
So, when man's arms had circled all man's race,
The liberal compass of his warm embrace
Stretched bigger yet in the dark bounds of space;
With hands a-grope he felt smooth Nature's grace,
Drew her to breast and kissed her sweetheart face:
Yea, man found neighbors in great hills and trees
And streams and clouds and suns and birds and bees,
And throbbed with neighbor-loves in loving these.
But oh, the poor! the poor! the poor!
That stand by the inward-opening door
Trade's hand doth tighten ever more,
And sigh their monstrous foul-air sigh
For the outside hills of liberty,
Where Nature spreads her wild blue sky
For Art to make into melody!
Thou Trade! thou king of the modern days!

Change thy ways,

Change thy ways;

Let the sweaty laborers file

A little while,

A little while,

Where Art and Nature sing and smile.

Trade! is thy heart all dead, all dead?
And hast thou nothing but a head?
I'm all for heart," the flute-voice said,
And into sudden silence fled,
Like as a blush that while 'tis red
Dies to a still, still white instead.

Thereto a thrilling calm succeeds,
Till presently the silence breeds
A little breeze among the reeds
That seems to blow by sea-marsh weeds:
Then from the gentle stir and fret
Sings out the melting clarionet,
Like as a lady sings while yet
Her eyes with salty tears are wet.
"O Trade! O Trade!" the Lady said,
"I too will wish thee utterly dead
If all thy heart is in thy head.
For O my God! and O my God!
What shameful ways have women trod
At beckoning of Trade's golden rod!
Alas, when sighs are traders' lies,
And heart's-ease eyes and violet eyes
Are merchandise!
O purchased lips that kiss with pain!
O cheeks coin-spotted with smirch and stain!
O trafficked hearts that break in twain!
—And yet what wonder at my sisters' crime?
So hath Trade withered up Love's sinewy prime
Men love not women as in olden time.
Ah, not in these cold merchantable days
Deem men their life an opal gray, where plays
The one red Sweet of gracious ladies'-praise.
Now, comes a suitor with sharp prying eye—
Says, *Here, you Lady, if you'll sell, I'll buy:*

Come, heart for heart—a trade? What! weeping? why?
Shame on such wooers' dapper mercery!
I would my lover kneeling at my feet
In humble manliness should cry, *O sweet!*
I know not if thy heart my heart will greet:
I ask not if thy love my love can meet:
Whate'er thy worshipful soft tongue shall say,
I'll kiss thine answer, be it yea or nay:
I do but know I love thee, and I pray
To be thy knight until my dying day.
Woe him that cunning trades in hearts contrives!
Base love good women to base loving drives.
If men loved larger, larger were our lives;
And wooed they nobler, won they nobler wives."

There thrust the bold straightforward horn
To battle for that lady lorn,
With heartsome voice of mellow scorn,
Like any knight in knighthood's morn.

"Now comfort thee," said he,

"Fair Lady.

For God shall right thy grievous wrong,
And man shall sing thee a true-love song,
Voiced in act his whole life long,

Yea, all thy sweet life long,

Fair Lady.

Where's he that craftily hath said,
The day of chivalry is dead?
I'll prove that lie upon his head,

Or I will die instead,

Fair Lady.

Is Honor gone into his grave?
Hath Faith become a caitiff knave,
And Selfhood turned into a slave
To work in Mammon's cave,

Fair Lady?

Will Truth's long blade ne'er gleam again?
Hath Giant Trade in dungeons slain
All great contempts of mean-got gain
And hates of inward stain,

Fair Lady?

For aye shall name and fame be sold,
And place be hugged for the sake of gold,
And smirch-robed Justice feebly scold
At Crime all money-bold,

Fair Lady?

Shall self-wrapt husbands aye forget
Kiss-pardons for the daily fret
Wherewith sweet wifely eyes are wet—
Blind to lips kiss-wise set—

Fair Lady?

Shall lovers higgie, heart for heart,
Till wooing grows a trading mart
Where much for little, and all for part,
Make love a cheapening art,

Fair Lady?

Shall woman scorch for a single sin
That her betrayer may revel in,
And she be burnt, and he but grin
When that the flames begin,

Fair Lady?

Shall ne'er prevail the woman's plea,
We maids would far, far whiter be
If that our eyes might sometimes see
Men maids in purity,

Fair Lady?

Shall Trade aye salve his conscience-aches
With jibes at Chivalry's old mistakes—
The wars that o'erhot knighthood makes
For Christ's and ladies' sakes,

Fair Lady?

Now by each knight that e'er hath prayed
To fight like a man and love like a maid,
Since Pembroke's life, as Pembroke's blade,
I' the scabbard, death, was laid,

Fair Lady,

I dare avouch my faith is bright
That God doth right and God hath might.
Nor time hath changed His hair to white,
Nor His dear love to spite,

Fair Lady.

I doubt no doubts: I strive, and shrive my clay,
And fight my fight in the patient modern way
For true love and for thee—ah me! and pray
To be thy knight until my dying day,

Fair Lady.”

Made end that knightly horn, and spurred away
Into the thick of the melodious fray.

And then the hautboy played and smiled,
And sang like any large-eyed child,
Cool-hearted and all undefiled.

“Huge Tradel!” he said,

“Would thou would'st lift me on thy head
And run where'er my finger led!

Once said a Man—and wise was He—

Never shalt thou the heavens see,

Save as a little child thou be.”

Then o'er sea-lashings of commingling tunes

The ancient wise bassoons,

Like weird

Gray-beard

Old harpers sitting on the high sea-dunes,

Chanted runes:

“Bright-waved gain, gray-waved loss,

The sea of all doth lash and toss,
One wave forward and one across:
But now 'twas trough, now 'tis crest,
And worst doth foam and flash to best,
And curst to blest.

Life! Life! thou sea-fugue, writ from east to west,
Love, Love alone can pore
On thy dissolving score
Of harsh half-phrasings,
Blotted ere writ,
And double erasings
Of chords most fit.

Yea, Love, sole music-master blest,
May read thy weltering palimpsest.
To follow Time's dying melodies through,
And never to lose the old in the new,
And ever to solve the discords true—
Love alone can do.

And ever Love hears the poor-folks' crying,
And ever Love hears the women's sighing,
And ever sweet knighthood's death-defying,
And ever wise childhood's deep implying,
But never a trader's glozing and lying.

And yet shall Love himself be heard,
Though long deferred, though long deferred:
O'er the modern waste a dove hath whirred:
Music is Love in search of a word."

MY SPRINGS

*I*n the heart of the Hills of Life, I know
Two springs that with unbroken flow
Forever pour their lucent streams
Into my soul's far Lake of Dreams.

Not larger than two eyes, they lie
Beneath the many-changing sky
And mirror all of life and time,
—Serene and dainty pantomime.

Shot through with lights of stars and dawns,
And shadowed sweet by ferns and fawns,
—Thus heaven and earth together vie
Their shining depths to sanctify.

Always when the large Form of Love
Is hid by storms that rage above,
I gaze in my two springs and see
Love in his very verity.

Always when Faith with stifling stress
Of grief hath died in bitterness,
I gaze in my two springs and see
A Faith that smiles immortally.

Always when Charity and Hope,
In darkness bounden, feebly grope,
I gaze in my two springs and see
A Light that sets my captives free.

Always, when Art on perverse wing
Flies where I cannot hear him sing,
I gaze in my two springs and see
A charm that brings him back to me.

When Labor faints, and Glory fails,
And coy Reward in sighs exhales,
I gaze in my two springs and see
Attainment full and heavenly.

O Love, O Wife, thine eyes are they,
—My springs from out whose shining gray
Issue the sweet celestial streams
That feed my life's bright Lake of Dreams.

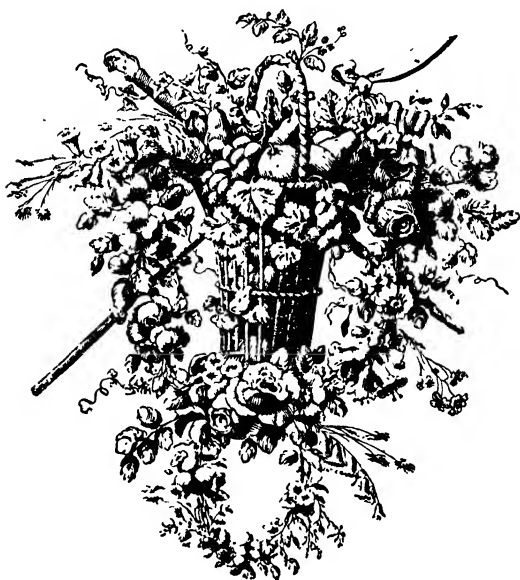
Oval and large and passion-pure
And gray and wise and honor-sure;
Soft as a dying violet-breath
Yet calmly unafraid of death;

Thronged, like two dove-cotes of gray doves,
With wife's and mother's and poor-folk's loves,
And home-loves and high glory-loves
And science-loves and story-loves,

And loves for all that God and man
In art and nature make or plan,
And lady-loves for spidery lace
And broideries and supple grace

And diamonds and the whole sweet round
Of littles that large life compound,
And loves for God and God's bare truth,
And loves for Magdalen and Ruth,

Dear eyes, dear eyes and rare complete—
Being heavenly-sweet and earthly-sweet,
—I marvel that God made you mine,
For when He frowns, 'tis then ye shine!



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I.



Age that half believ'st thou half believ'st,
Half doubt'st the substance of thine own half doubt,
And, half perceiving that thou half perceiv'st,
Stand'st at thy temple door, heart in, head out!
Lo! while thy heart's within, helping the choir,
Without, thine eyes range up and down the time,
Blinking at o'er-bright science, smit with desire
To see and not to see. Hence, crime on crime.
Yea, if the Christ (called thine) now paced yon street,
Thy halfness hot with His rebuke would swell;
Legions of scribes would rise and run and beat
His fair intolerable Wholeness twice to hell.
Nay (so, dear Heart, thou whisperest in my soul),
'T is a half time, yet Time will make it whole.

II.

Now at thy soft recalling voice I rise
Where thought is lord o'er Time's complete estate,
Like as a dove from out the gray sedge flies
To tree-tops green where cooes his heavenly mate.
From these clear coverts high and cool I see
How every time with every time is knit,

And each to all is mortised cunningly,
And none is sole or whole, yet all are fit.
Thus, if this Age but as a comma show
 'Twixt weightier clauses of large-worded years,
My calmer soul scorns not the mark: I know
 This crooked point Time's complex sentence clears.
 Yet more I learn while, Friend! I sit by thee:
 Who sees all time, sees all eternity.

III.

If I do ask, How God can dumbness keep
 While Sin creeps grinning through His house of Time,
Stabbing His saintliest children in their sleep,
 And staining holy walls with clots of crime?—
Or, How may He whose wish but names a fact
 Refuse what miser's-scanting of supply
Would richly glut each void where man hath lacked
 Of grace or bread?—or, How may Power deny
Wholeness to th' almost-folk that hurt our hope—
 These heart-break Hamlets who so barely fail
In life or art that but a hair's more scope
 Had set them fair on heights they ne'er may scale?—
 Somehow by thee, dear Love, I win content:
 Thy Perfect stops th' Imperfect's argument.

IV.

By the more height of thy sweet stature grown,
 Twice-eyed with thy gray vision set in mine,
I ken far lands to wifeless men unknown,
 I compass stars for one-sexed eyes too fine.
No text on sea-horizons cloudily writ,

No maxim vaguely starred in fields or skies,
But this wise thou-in-me deciphers it:

Oh, thou 'rt the Height of heights, the Eye of eyes.
Not hardest Fortune's most unbounded stress

Can blind my soul nor hurl it from on high,
Possessing thee, the self of loftiness,

And very light that Light discovers by.

Howe'er thou turn'st, wrong Earth! still Love's in
sight:

For we are taller than the breadth of night.



LAUS MARIÆ

*A*cross the brook of Time man leaping goes
On stepping-stones of epochs, that uprise
Fixed, memorable, midst broad shallow flows
Of neutrals, kill-times, sleeps, indifferencies.
So 'twixt each morn and night rise salient heaps:
Some cross with but a zigzag, jaded pace
From meal to meal: some with convulsive leaps
Shake the green tussocks of malign disgrace:
And some advance by system and deep art
O'er vantages of wealth, place, learning, tact.
But thou within thyself, dear manifold heart,
Dost bind all epochs in one dainty Fact.
Oh, sweet, my pretty sum of history,
I leapt the breadth of Time in loving thee!

THE BEE

What time I paced, at pleasant morn,
A deep and dewy wood,
I heard a mellow hunting-horn
Make dim report of Dian's lustihood
Far down a heavenly hollow.
Mine ear, though fain, had pain to follow:
Tara! it twanged, tara-tara! it blew,
Yet wavered oft, and flew
Most ficklewise about, or here, or there,
A music now from earth and now from air.
But on a sudden, lo!
I marked a blossom shiver to and fro
With dainty inward storm; and there within
A down-drawn trump of yellow jessamine
A bee
Thrust up its sad-gold body lustily,
All in a honey madness hotly bound
On blissful burglary.
A cunning sound
In that wing-music held me: down I lay
In amber shades of many a golden spray,
Where looping low with languid arms the Vine
In wreaths of ravishment did overtwine
Her kneeling Live-Oak, thousand-fold to plight
Herself unto her own true stalwart knight.

As some dim blur of distant music nears

The long-desiring sense, and slowly clears
To forms of time and apprehensive tune,
So, as I lay, full soon

Interpretation throve: the bee's fanfare,
Through sequent films of discourse vague as air,
Passed to plain words, while, fanning faint perfume,
The bee o'erhung a rich, unrifled bloom:

“O Earth, fair lordly Blossom, soft a-shine
Upon the star-pranked universal vine,
Hast nought for me?

To thee

Come I, a poet, hereward haply blown,
From out another worldflower lately flown.

Wilt ask, *What profit e'er a poet brings?*

He beareth starry stuff about his wings
To pollen thee and sting thee fertile: nay,
If still thou narrow thy contracted way,

—Worldflower, if thou refuse me—

—Worldflower, if thou abuse me,

And hoist thy stamen's spear-point high

To wound my wing and mar mine eye—

Nathless, I'll drive me to thy deepest sweet,
Yea, richlier shall that pain the pollen beat
From me to thee, for oft these pollens be
Fine dust from wars that poets wage for thee.
But, O beloved Earthbloom soft a-shine

Upon the universal Jessamine,

Prithee, abuse me not,

Prithee, refuse me not,

Yield, yield the heartsome honey love to me

Hid in thy nectary!”

And as I sank into a dimmer dream

The pleading bee's song-burthen sole did seem

“Hast ne'er a honey-drop of love for me
In thy huge nectary?”

THE HARLEQUIN OF DREAMS

Swift, through some trap mine eyes have never
found,
Dim-panelled in the painted scene of Sleep,
Thou, giant Harlequin of Dreams, dost leap
Upon my spirit's stage. Then Sight and Sound,
Then Space and Time, then Language, Mete and Bound
And all familiar Forms that firmly keep
Man's reason in the road, change faces, peep
Betwixt the legs and mock the daily round.
Yet thou can'st more than mock: sometimes my tears
At midnight break through bounden lids—a sign
Thou hast a heart: and oft thy little leaven
Of dream-taught wisdom works me bettered years.
In one night witch, saint, trickster, fool divine,
I think thou 'rt Jester at the Court of Heaven!



REMONSTRANCE

Opinion, let me alone: I am not thine.
Prim Creed, with categoric point, forbear
To feature me my Lord by rule and line.
Thou can'st not measure Mistress Nature's hair,
Not one sweet inch: nay, if thy sight is sharp,
Would'st count the strings upon an angel's harp?
Forbear, forbear.

Oh, let me love my Lord more fathom deep
Than there is line to sound with: let me love
My fellow not as men that mandates keep:
Yea, all that's lovable, below, above,
That let me love by heart, by heart, because
(Free from the penal pressure of the laws)
I find it fair.

The tears I weep by day and bitter night,
Opinion! for thy sole salt vintage fall.
—As morn by morn I rise with fresh delight,
Time through my casement cheerily doth call,
'Nature is new, 'tis birthday every day;
Come feast with me, let no man say me nay,
Whate'er befall.'

So fare I forth to feast: I sit beside
Some brother bright: but, ere good-morrow's passed,
Burly Opinion wedging in hath cried,
'Thou shalt not sit by us, to break thy fast,
Save to our Rubric thou subscribe and swear—
Religion hath blue eyes and yellow hair:
She's Saxon, all.'

Then, hard a-hungered for my brother's grace
Till well-nigh fain to swear his folly's true,
In sad dissent I turn my longing face
To him that sits on the left: 'Brother,—with you?'
—'Nay, not with me, save thou subscribe and swear
Religion hath black eyes and raven hair:
Nought else is true.'

Debarred of banquets that my heart could make
With every man on every day of life,
I homeward turn, my fires of pain to slake
In deep endearments of a worshipped wife.
'I love thee well, dear Love,' quoth she, 'and yet
Would that thy creed with mine completely met,
As one, not two.'

Assassin! Thief! Opinion, 'tis thy work.
By Church, by throne, by hearth, by every good
That's in the Town of Time, I see thee lurk,
And e'er some shadow stays where thou hast stood.
Thou hand'st sweet Socrates his hemlock sour;
Thou sav'st Barabbas in that hideous hour,
And stabb'st the good

Deliverer Christ; thou rack'st the souls of men;
Thou tosses girls to lions and boys to flames;
Thou hew'st Crusader down by Saracen;
Thou buildest closets full of secret shames;
Indifferent cruel, thou dost blow the blaze
Round Ridley or Servetus; all thy days
Smell scorched; I would

—Thou base-born Accident of time and place—
Bigot Pretender unto Judgment's throne—
Bastard, that claimest with a cunning face
Those rights the true, true Son of Man doth own
By Love's authority—thou Rebel cold
At head of civil wars and quarrels old—
Thou Knife on a throne—

I would thou left'st me free, to live with love,
And faith, that through the love of love doth find
My Lord's dear presence in the stars above,
The clods below, the flesh without, the mind
Within, the bread, the tear, the smile.
Opinion, damned Intriguer, gray with guile,
Let me alone.

THE SHIP OF EARTH

*T*hou Ship of Earth, with Death, and Birth, and
Life, and Sex aboard,
And fires of Desires burning hotly in the hold,
I fear thee, O! I fear thee, for I hear the tongue and
sword
At battle on the deck, and the wild mutineers are bold!

The dewdrop morn may fall from off the petal of the sky,
But all the deck is wet with blood and stains the
crystal red.
A pilot, God, a pilot! for the helm is left awry,
And the best sailors in the ship lie there among the
dead!



LIFE AND SONG

I f life were caught by a clarionet,
And a wild heart, throbbing in the ree
Should thrill its joy and trill its fret,
And utter its heart in every deed,

Then would this breathing clarionet
Type what the poet fain would be;
For none o' the singers ever yet
Has wholly lived his minstrelsy,

Or clearly sung his true, true thought,
Or utterly bodied forth his life,
Or out of life and song has wrought
The perfect one of man and wife;

Or lived and sung, that Life and Song
Might each express the other's all,
Careless if life or art were long
Since both were one, to stand or fall;

So that the wonder struck the crowd,
Who shouted it about the land:
His song was only living aloud,
His work, a singing with his hand!

TO RICHARD WAGNER

I saw a sky of stars that rolled in grime.
All glory twinkled through some sweat of fight,
From each tall chimney of the roaring time
That shot his fire far up the sooty night
Mixt fuels—Labor's Right and Labor's Crime—
Sent upward throb on throb of scarlet light
Till huge hot blushes in the heavens blent
With golden hues of Trade's high firmament.

Fierce burned the furnaces; yet all seemed well,
Hope dreamed rich music in the rattling mills.
'Ye foundries, ye shall cast my church a bell,'
Loud cried the Future from the farthest hills:
'Ye groaning forces, crack me every shell
Of customs, old constraints, and narrow ills;
Thou, lithe Invention, wake and pry and guess,
Till thy deft mind invents me Happiness.'

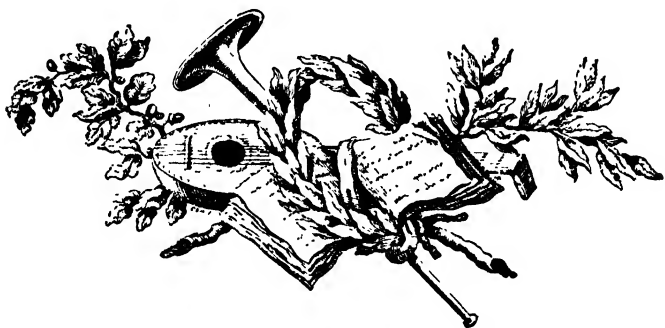
And I beheld high scaffoldings of creeds
Crumbling from round Religion's perfect Fane:
And a vast noise of rights, wrongs, powers, needs,
—Cries of new Faiths that called 'This Way is plain
—Grindings of upper against lower greeds—
—Fond sighs for old things, shouts for new,—did reign
Below that stream of golden fire that broke,
Mottled with red, above the seas of smoke.

Hark! Gay fanfares from halls of old Romance
Strike through the clouds of clamor: who be these
That, paired in rich processional, advance
From darkness o'er the murk mad factories
Into yon road, and sink, strange Ministrants!
Sheer down to earth, with many minstrelsies
And motions fine, and mix about the scene
And fill the Time with forms of ancient mien?

Bright ladies and brave knights of Fatherland;
Sad mariners, no harbor e'er may hold,
A swan soft floating towards a magic strand;
Dim ghosts, of earth, air, water, fire, steel, gold,
Wind, grief, and love; a lewd and lurking band
Of Powers—dark Conspiracy, Cunning cold,
Gray Sorcery; magic cloaks and rings and rods;
Valkyries, heroes, Rhinemaidens, giants, gods!

* * * * *

O Wagner, westward bring thy heavenly art,
No trifter thou: Siegfried and Wotan be
Names for big ballads of the modern heart.
Thine ears hear deeper than thine eyes can see.
Voice of the monstrous mill, the shouting mart,
Not less of airy cloud and wave and tree,
Thou, thou, if even to thyself unknown,
Hast power to say the Time in terms of tone.





A SONG OF LOVE

Hey, rose, just born
Twin to a thorn;
Was 't so with you, O Love and Scorn?

Sweet eyes that smiled,
Now wet and wild;
O Eye and Tear—mother and child.

Well: Love and Pain
Be kinsfolk twain:
Yet would, Oh would I could love again.

TO BEETHOVEN

*I*n o'er-strict calyx lingering,
Lay music's bud too long unblown,
Till thou, Beethoven, breathed the spring:
Then bloomed the perfect rose of tone.

O Psalmist of the weak, the strong,
O Troubadour of love and strife,
Co-Litanist of right and wrong,
Sole Hymner of the whole of life,

I know not how, I care not why,—
Thy music sets my world at ease,
And melts my passion's mortal cry
In satisfying symphonies.

It soothes my accusations sour
'Gainst thoughts that fray the restless soul:
The stain of death; the pain of power;
The lack of love 'twixt part and whole;

The yea-nay of Freewill and Fate,
Whereof both cannot be, yet are;
The praise a poet wins to late
Who starves from earth into a star;

The lies that serve great parties well,
While truths but give their Christ a cross;
The loves that send warm souls to hell,
While cold-blood neuters take no loss;

Th' indifferent smile that nature's grace
On Jesus, Judas, pours alike;
Th' indifferent frown on nature's face
When luminous lightnings strangely strike

The sailor praying on his knees
And spare his mate that's cursing God;
How babes and widows starve and freeze,
Yet Nature will not stir a clod;

Why Nature blinds us in each act
Yet makes no law in mercy bend,
No pitfall from our feet retract,
No storm cry out, *Take shelter, friend*;

Why snakes that crawl the earth should ply
Rattles, that whoso hears may shun,
While serpent lightnings in the sky
But rattle when the deed is done;

How truth can e'er be good for them
That have not eyes to bear its strength,
And yet how stern our lights condemn
Delays that lend the darkness length;

To know all things, save knowingness;
To grasp, yet loosen, feeling's rein;
To waste no manhood on success;
To look with pleasure upon pain;

Though teased by small mixed social claims,
To lose no large simplicity,
And midst of clear-seen crimes and shames
To move with manly purity;

To hold, with keen, yet loving eyes,
Art's realm from Cleverness apart,
To know the Clever good and wise,
Yet haunt the lonesome heights of Art;

O Psalmist of the weak, the strong,
O Troubadour of love and strife,
Co-Litanist of right and wrong,
Sole Hymner of the whole of life,

I know not how, I care not why,
Thy music brings this broil at ease,
And melts my passion's mortal cry
In satisfying symphonies.

Yea, it forgives me all my sins,
Fits life to love like rhyme to rhyme,
And tunes the task each day begins
By the last trumpet-note of Time.



TO OUR MOCKING-BIRD

DIED OF A CAT, MAY, 1878

I.

*T*rillets of humor,—shrewdest whistle-wit,—
Contralto cadences of grave desire
Such as from off the passionate Indian pyre
Drift down through sandal-odored flames that split
About the slim young widow who doth sit
And sing above,—midnights of tone entire,—
Tissues of moonlight shot with songs of fire;—
Bright drops of tune, from oceans infinite
Of melody, sipped off the thin-edged wave
And trickling down the beak,—discourses brave
Of serious matter that no man may guess,—
Good-fellow greetings, cries of light distress—
All these but now within the house we heard:
O Death, wast thou too deaf to hear the bird?

II.

Ah me, though never an ear for song, thou hast
A tireless tooth for songsters: thus of late
Thou camest, Death, thou Cat! and leap'st my gate,
And, long ere Love could follow, thou had'st passed
Within and snatched away, how fast, how fast,
My bird—wit, songs, and all—thy richest freight
Since that fell time when in some wink of fate
Thy yellow claws unsheathed and stretched, and cast

Sharp hold on Keats, and dragged him slow away,
And harried him with hope and horrid play—
Ay, him, the world's best wood-bird, wise with song—
Till thou had'st wrought thine own last mortal wrong.
'Twas wrong! 'twas wrong! I care not, *wrong's* the
word—
To munch our Keats and crunch our mocking-bird.

III.

Nay, Bird; my grief gainsays the Lord's best right.
The Lord was fain, at some late festal time,
That Keats should set all Heaven's woods in rhyme,
And thou in bird-notes. Lo, this tearful night,
Methinks I see thee, fresh from death's despite,
Perched in a palm-grove, wild with pantomime,
O'er blissful companies couched in shady thyme,
—Methinks I hear thy silver whistlings bright
Mix with the mighty discourse of the wise,
Till broad Beethoven, deaf no more, and Keats,
'Midst of much talk, uplift their smiling eyes,
And mark the music of thy wood-conceits,
And halfway pause on some large, courteous word,
And call thee "Brother," O thou heavenly Bird!



THE DOVE

*I*f haply thou, O Desdemona Morn,
Should'st call along the curving sphere, "Remain,
Dear Night, sweet Moor; nay, leave me not in scorn!"
With soft halloos of heavenly love and pain;—

Should'st thou, O Spring! a-cower in coverts dark,
'Gainst proud supplanting Summer sing thy plea,
And move the mighty woods through mailed bark
Till mortal heart-break throbbed in every tree;—

Or (grievous *if* that may be *yea* o'er-soon!),
If thou, my Heart, long holden from thy Sweet,
Should'st knock Death's door with mellow shocks of tune,
Sad inquiry to make—*When may we meet?*

Nay, if ye three, O Morn! O Spring! O Heart!
Should chant grave unisons of grief and love;
Ye could not mourn with more melodious art
Than daily doth yon dim sequestered dove.

TO——, WITH A ROSE

I asked my heart to say
Some word whose worth my love's devoir might pay
Upon my Lady's natal day.

Then said my heart to me:
*Learn from the rhyme that now shall come to thee
What fits thy Love most lovingly.*

This gift that learning shows;
For, as a rhyme unto its rhyme-twin goes,
I send a rose unto a Rose.



PSALM OF THE WEST

*L*and of the willful gospel, thou worst and thou best;
Tall Adam of lands, new-made of the dust of the West;
Thou wroughtest alone in the Garden of God, unblest
Till He fashioned lithe Freedom to lie for thine Eve on
thy breast—

Till out of thy heart's dear neighborhood, out of thy
side,

He fashioned an intimate Sweet one and brought thee
a Bride.

Cry hail! nor bewail that the wound of her coming was
wide.

Lo, Freedom reached forth where the world as an apple
hung red;

*Let us taste the whole radiant round of it, gayly she said:
If we die, at the worst we shall lie as the first of the dead.*

Knowledge of Good and of Ill, O Land! she hath given
thee;

Perilous godhoods of choosing have rent thee and riven
thee;

Will's high adoring to Ill's low exploring hath driven
thee—

Freedom, thy Wife, hath uplifted thy life and clean
shriven thee!

Her shalt thou clasp for a balm to the scars of thy breast,
Her shalt thou kiss for a calm to thy wars of unrest,
Her shalt extol in the psalm of the soul of the West.

For Weakness, in freedom, grows stronger than Strength
with a chain;

And Error, in freedom, will come to lamenting his stain,

Till freely repenting he whiten his spirit again;
And Friendship, in freedom, will blot out the bounding of
 race;
And straight Law, in freedom, will curve to the rounding
 of grace;
And Fashion, in freedom, will die of the lie in her face;
 And Desire flame white on the sense as a fire on a
 height,
 And Sex flame white in the soul as a star in the night,
 And Marriage plight sense unto soul as the two-colored
 light
 Of the fire and the star shines one with a duplicate
 might;
And Science be known as the sense making love to the All,
And Art be known as the soul making love to the All,
And Love be known as the marriage of man with the All—
 Till Science to knowing the Highest shall lovingly turn,
 Till Art to loving the Highest shall consciously burn,
 Till Science to Art as a man to a woman shall yearn,
 —Then morn!
When Faith from the wedding of Knowing and Loving
 shall purely be born,
And the Child shall smile in the West, and the West to
 the East give morn,
And the Time in that ultimate Prime shall forget old re-
 gretting and scorn,
Yea, the stream of the light shall give off in a shimmer the
 dream of the night forlorn.

Once on a time a soul
 Too full of his dole
In a querulous dream went crying from pole to pole—
 Went sobbing and crying
 For ever a sorrowful song of living and dying,
 How *life was the dropping and death the drying*

Of a Tear that fell in a day when God was sighing.
And ever Time tossed him bitterly to and fro
As a shuttle inlaying a perilous warp of woe
In the woof of things from terminal snow to snow,

Till, lo!

Rest.

And he sank on the grass of the earth as a lark on its nest,
And he lay in the midst of the way from the east to the
west.

Then the East came out from the east and the West from
the west,

And, behold! in the gravid deeps of the lower dark,
While, above, the wind was fanning the dawn as a
spark,

The East and the West took form as the wings of a lark.
One wing was feathered with facts of the uttermost Past,
And one with the dreams of a prophet; and both sailed
fast

And met where the sorrowful Soul on the earth was cast.

Then a Voice said: *Thine, if thou lovest enough to use;*
But another: *To fly and to sing is pain: refuse!*

Then the Soul said: *Come, O my wings! I cannot but
choose.*

And the Soul was a-tremble like as a new-born thing,
Till the spark of the dawn wrought a conscience in heart
as in wing,

Saying, *Thou art the lark of the dawn; it is time to sing.*

Then that artist began in a lark's low circling to pass;
And first he sang at the height of the top of the grass
A song of the herds that are born and die in the mass.

And next he sang a celestial-passionate round
At the height of the lips of a woman above the ground,
How *Love was a fair true Lady, and Death a wild
hound,*

*And she called, and he licked her hand and with girdle
was bound.*

And then with a universe-love he was hot in the wings,
And the sun stretched beams to the worlds as the shining
strings

Of the large hid harp that sounds when an all-lover sings;
And the sky's blue traction prevailed o'er the earth's in
might,

And the passion of flight grew mad with the glory of
height,

And the uttering of song was like to the giving of light;
And he learned that hearing and seeing wrought nothing
alone,

And that music on earth much light upon Heaven had
thrown,

And he melted-in silvery sunshine with silvery tone;
And the spirals of music e'er higher and higher he
wound

Till the luminous cinctures of melody up from the
ground

Arose as the shaft of a tapering tower of sound—

Arose for an unstricken full-finished Babel of sound.

But God was not angry, nor ever confused his tongue,
For not out of selfish nor impudent travail was wrung
The song of all men and all things that the all-lover sung.

Then he paused at the top of his tower of song on high,
And the voice of the God of the artist from far in the
sky

Said, *Son, look down: I will cause that a Time gone by
Shall pass, and reveal his heart to thy loving eye.*

Far spread, below,
The sea that fast hath locked in his loose flow
All secrets of Atlantis' drownèd. woe
Lay bound about with night on every hand,

Save down the eastern brink a shining band
Of day made out a little way from land.
Then from that shore the wind upbore a cry:
Thou Sea, thou Sea of Darkness! why, oh why
Dost waste thy West in unthrift mystery?
But ever the idiot sea-mouths foam and fill,
And never a wave doth good for man or ill,
And Blank is king, and Nothing hath his will:
And like as grim-beaked pelicans level file
Across the sunset toward their nightly isle
On solemn wings that wave but seldomwhile,
So leanly sails the day behind the day
To where the Past's lone Rock o'erglooms the spray
And down its mortal fissures sinks away.

Master, Master, break this ban:
The wave lacks Thee.
Oh, is it not to widen man
Stretches the sea?
Oh, must the sea-bird's idle van
Alone be free?

Into the Sea of the Dark doth creep
Björne's pallid sail,
As the face of a walker in his sleep,
Set rigid and most pale,
About the night doth peer and peep
In a dream of an ancient tale.

Lo, here is made a hasty cry:
Land, land, upon the west!—
God save such land! Go by, go by:
Here may no mortal rest,
Where this waste hell of slate doth lie
And grind the glacier's breast.

The sail goeth limp: hey, flap and strain!
Round eastward slanteth the mast;
As the sleep-walker waked with pain,
White-clothed in the midnight blast,
Doth stare and quake, and stride again
To houseward all aghast.

Yet as, *A ghost!* his household cry:
He hath followed a ghost in flight.
Let us see the ghost—his household fly
With lamps to search the night—
So Norsemen's sails run out and try
The Sea of the Dark with light.

Stout Are Marson, southward whirled
From out the tempest's hand,
Doth skip the sloping of the world
To Huitramannaland,
Where Georgia's oaks with moss-beards curled
Wave by the shining strand,

And sway in sighs from Florida's Spring
Or Carolina's Palm—
What time the mocking-bird doth bring
The woods his artist's-balm,
Singing the Song of Everything
Consummate-sweet and calm—

Land of large merciful-hearted skies,
Big bounties, rich increase,
Green rests for Trade's blood-shotten eyes,
For o'er-beat brains surcease,
For Love the dear woods' sympathies,
For Grief the wise woods' peace,

For Need rich givings of hid powers
In hills and vales quick-won,
For Greed large exemplary flowers
That ne'er have toiled nor spun,
For Heat fair-tempered winds and showers,
For Cold the neighbor sun.

Land where the Spirits of June-Heat
From out their forest-maze
Stray forth at eve with loitering feet,
And fervent hymns upraise
In bland accord and passion sweet
Along the Southern ways—

“O Darkness, tawny Twin whose Twin hath ceased,
Thou Odor from the day-flower's crushing born,
Thou visible Sigh out of the mournful East,
That cannot see her lord again till morn:
O Leaves, with hollow palms uplifted high
To catch the stars' most sacred rain of light:
O pallid Lily-petals fain to die
Soul-stung by subtle passion of the night:
O short-breath'd Winds beneath the gracious moon,
Running mild errands for mild violets,
Or carrying sighs from the red lips of June
What wavering way the odor-current sets:
O Stars wreathed vinewise round yon heavenly dells,
Or thrust from out the sky in curving sprays,
Or whorled, or looped with pendant flower-bells,
Or bramble-tangled in a brilliant maze,
Or lying like young lilies in a lake
About the great white Lily of the moon,
Or drifting white from where in heaven shake
Star-portraits of apple trees in June,
Or lapp'd as leaves of a great rose of stars,

Or shyly clambering up cloud-lattices,
Or trampled pale in the red path of Mars,
Or trim-set quaint in gardeners'-fantasies:
O long June Night-sounds crooned among the leaves;
O whispered confidence of Dark and Green;
O murmurs in old moss about old eaves;
O tinklings floating over water-sheen."

Then Leif, bold son of Eric the Red,
To the South of the West doth flee—
Past slaty Helluland is sped,
Past Markland's woody lea,
Till round about fair Vinland's head,
Where Taunton helps the sea,

The Norseman calls, the anchor falls,
The mariners hurry a-strand:
They wassail with fore-drunken skals
Where prophet wild grapes stand;
They lift the Leifsbooth's hasty walls,
They stride about the land—

New England, thee! whose ne'er-spent wine
As blood doth stretch each vein,
And urge thee, sinewed like thy vine,
Through peril and all pain,
To grasp Endeavor's towering Pine,
And, once ahold, remain—

Land where the strenuous-handed Wind
With sarcasm of a friend
Doth smite the man would lag behind
To frontward of his end;
Yea, where the taunting fall and grind
Of Nature's Ill doth send

Such mortal challenge of a clown
Rude-thrust upon the soul,
That men but smile where mountains frown
Or scowling waters roll,
And Nature's front of battle down
Do hurl from pole to pole.

Now long the Sea of Darkness glimmers low
With sails from Northland flickering to and fro—
Thorwald, Karlsefne, and those twin heirs of woe,
Hellboge and Finnge, in treasonable bed
Slain by the ill-born child of Eric Red,
Freydisa false. Till, as much time is fled,
Once more the vacant airs with darkness fill,
Once more the wave doth never good nor ill,
And Blank is king, and Nothing works his will;
And leanly sails the day behind the day
To where the Past's lone Rock o'erglooms the spray
And down its mortal fissures sinks away,
As when the grim-beaked pelicans level file
Across the sunset to their seaward isle
On solemn wings that wave but seldomwhile.

Master, Master, poets sing;
The Time calls Thee;
Yon Sea binds hard on everything
Man longs to be:
Oh, shall the sea-bird's aimless wing
Alone move free?

Santa Maria, well thou tremblest down the wave,
Thy *Pinta* far abow, thy *Niña* nigh astern:
Columbus stands in the night alone, and, passing grave,
Yearns o'er the sea as tones o'er under-silence yearn.
Heartens his heart as friend befriends his friend less brave,

Makes burn the faiths that cool, and cools the doubts
that burn:—

I.

“Twixt this and dawn, three hours my soul will smite
With prickly seconds, or less tolerably
With dull-blade minutes flatwise slapping me.
Wait, Heart! Time moves.—Thou lithe young Western
Night,
Just-crownèd king, slow riding to thy right,
Would God that I might straddle mutiny
Calm as thou sitt'st yon never-managed sea,
Balk'st with his balking, fliest with his flight,
Giv'st supple to his rearings and his falls,
Nor dropp'st one coronal star about thy brow
Whilst ever dayward thou art steadfast drawn!
Yea, would I rode these mad contentious brawls,
No damage taking from their If and How,
Nor no result save galloping to my Dawn!

II.

“My Dawn? my Dawn? How if it never break?
How if this West by other Wests is pieced,
And these by vacant Wests on Wests increased—
One Pain of Space, with hollow ache on ache
Throbbing and ceasing not for Christ's own sake?—
Big perilous theorem, hard for king and priest:
Pursue the West but long enough, 'tis East!
Oh, if this watery world no turning take!
Oh, if for all my logic, all my dreams,
Provings of that which is by that which seems,
Fears, hopes, chills, heats, hastes, patiences, droughts,
tears,
Wife-grievings, slights on love, embezzled years,

Hates, treaties, scorns, upliftings, loss and gain,—
This earth, no sphere, be all one sickening plane!

III.

“Or, haply, how if this contrarious West,
That me by turns hath starved, by turns hath fed,
Embraced, disgraced, beat back, solicited,
Have no fixed heart of Law within his breast,
Or with some different rhythm doth e’er contest
Nature in the East? Why, ’tis but three weeks fled
I saw my Judas needle shake his head
And flout the Pole that, east, he Lord confessed!
God! if this West should own some other Pole,
And with his tangled ways perplex my soul
Until the maze grow mortal, and I die
Where distraught Nature clean hath gone astray,
On earth some other wit than Time’s at play,
Some other God than mine above the sky!

IV.

“Now speaks mine other heart with cheerier seeming:
*Ho, Admirall! o’er-defalking to thy crew
Against thyself, thyself far overfew
To front yon multitudes of rebel scheming?*
Come, ye wild twenty years of heavenly dreaming!
Come, ye wild weeks since first this canvas drew
Out of vexed Palos ere the dawn was blue,
O’er milky waves about the bows full-creaming!
Come set me round with many faithful spears
Of confident remembrance—how I crushed
Cat-lived rebellions, pitfalled treasons, hushed
Scared husbands’ heart-break cries on distant wives,

Made cowards blush at whining for their lives,
Watered my parching souls, and dried their tears.

V.

“ Ere we Gomera cleared, a coward cried,
 Turn, turn: here be three caravels ahead,
 From Portugal, to take us: we are dead!
Hold Westward, pilot, calmly I replied.
So when the last land down the horizon died,
 Go back, go back! they prayed: *our hearts are lead.—*
 Friends, we are bound into the West, I said.
Then passed the wreck of a mast upon our side.
See (so they wept) God’s Warning! Admiral, turn!—
 Steersman, I said, hold straight into the West.
Then down the night we saw the meteor burn.
 So do the very heavens in fire protest:
Good Admiral, put about! O Spain, dear Spain!—
Hold straight into the West, I said again.

VI.

“ Next drive we o’er the slimy-weeded sea.
 Lol herebeneath (another coward cries)
 The cursèd land of sunk Atlantis lies:
This slime will suck us down—turn while thou’rt free!—
But no! I said, *Freedom bears West for me!*
 Yet when the long-time stagnant winds arise,
 And day by day the keel to westward flies,
My Good my people’s Ill doth come to be:
 Ever the winds into the West do blow;
 Never a ship, once turned, might homeward go;
Meanwhile we speed into the lonesome main.
 For Christ’s sake, parley, Admiral! Turn, before
We sail outside all bounds of help from pain!—
 Our help is in the West, I said once more.

VII.

“So when there came a mighty cry of *Land!*
And we clomb up and saw, and shouted strong
Salve Reginal all the ropes along,
But knew at morn how that a counterfeit band
Of level clouds had aped a silver strand;
So when we heard the orchard-bird’s small song,
And all the people cried, *A hellish throng*
To tempt us onward by the Devil planned,
Yea, all from hell—keen heron, fresh green weeds,
Pelican, tunny-fish, fair tapering reeds,
Lie-telling lands that ever shine and die
In clouds of nothing round the empty sky.
Tired Admiral, get thee from this hell, and rest!—
Steersman, I said, hold straight into the West.

VIII.

“I marvel how mine eye, ranging the Night,
From its big circling ever absently
Returns, thou large low Star, to fix on thee.
Maria! Star? No star: a Light, a Light!
Would’st leap ashore, Heart? Yonder burns—a Light.
Pedro Gutierrez, wake! come up to me;
I prithee, stand and gaze about the sea:
What seest? *Admiral, like as land—a Light!*
Well! Sanchez of Segovia, come and try:
What seest? *Admiral, naught but sea and sky!*
Well! But *I* saw It. Wait! the Pinta’s gun!
Why, look, ’tis dawn, the land is clear: ’tis done!
Two dawns do break at once from Time’s full hand—
God’s, East—mine, West: good friends, behold my
Land!”

Master, Master! faster fly
Now the hurrying seasons by;
Now the Sea of Darkness wide
Rolls in light from side to side;
Mark, slow drifting to the West
Down the trough and up the crest,
Yonder piteous heartsease petal
Many-motioned rise and settle—
Petal cast a-sea from land
By the awkward-fingered Hand
That, mistaking Nature's course,
Tears the love it fain would force—
Petal calm of heartsease flower
Smiling sweet on tempest sour,
Smiling where by crest and trough
Heartache Winds at heartsease scoff,
Breathing mild perfumes of prayer
'Twixt the scolding sea and air.

Mayflower, piteous Heartsease Petal!
Suavely down the sea-troughs settle,
Gravely breathe perfumes of prayer
'Twixt the scolding sea and air,
Bravely up the sea-hills rise—
Sea-hills slant thee toward the skies.
Master, hold disaster off
From the crest and from the trough;
Heartsease, on the heartache sea
God, thy God, will pilot thee.

Mayflower, Ship of Faith's best Hope!
Thou art sure if all men grope;
Mayflower, Ship of Hope's best Faith!
All is true the great God saith;
Mayflower, Ship of Charity!

Love is Lord of land and sea.
Oh, with love and love's best care
Thy large godly freightage bear—
Godly Hearts that, Grails of gold,
Still the blood of Faith do hold.

Now bold Massachusetts clear
Cuts the rounding of the sphere.
*Out the anchor, sail no more,
Lay us by the Future's shore—
Not the shore we sought, 'tis true,
But the time is come to do.
Leap, dear Standish, leap and wade;
Bradford, Hopkins, Tilley, wade:
Leap and wade ashore and kneel—
God be praised that steered the keel
Home is good and soft is rest,
Even in this jagged West:
Freedom lives, and Right shall stand;
Blood of Faith is in the land.*

Then in what time the primal icy years
Scraped slowly o'er the Puritans' hopes and fears,
Like as great glaciers built of frozen tears,
The Voice from far within the secret sky
Said, *Blood of Faith ye have? So; let us try.*
And presently
The anxious-masted ships that westward fare,
Cargo'd with trouble and a-list with care,
Their outraged decks hot back to England bear,
Then come again with stowage of worse weight,
Battle, and tyrannous Tax, and Wrong, and Hate,
And all bad items of Death's perilous freight.

O'er Cambridge set the yeomen's mark:
Climb, patriot, through the April dark.
O lanthorn! kindle fast thy light,
Thou budding star in the April night,
For never a star more news hath told,
Or later flame in heaven shall hold.
Ay, lanthorn on the North Church tower,
When that thy church hath had her hour,
Still from the top of Reverence high
Shalt thou illume Fame's ampler sky;
For, statured large o'er town and tree,
Time's tallest Figure stands by thee,
And, dim as now thy wick may shine,
The Future lights his lamp at thine.

Now haste thee while the way is clear,
Paul Revere!
Haste, Dawes! but haste thou not, O Sun!
To Lexington.

Then Devens looked and saw the light:
He got him forth into the night,
And watched alone on the river-shore,
And marked the British ferrying o'er.

John Parker! rub thine eyes and yawn:
But one o'clock and yet 'tis Dawn!
Quick, rub thine eyes and draw thy hose
The Morning comes ere darkness goes.
Have forth and call the yeomen out,
For somewhere, somewhere close about,
Full soon a Thing must come to be
Thine honest eyes shall stare to see—
Full soon before thy patriot eyes
Freedom from out of a Wound shall rise.

Then haste ye, Prescott and Revere!
Bring all the men of Lincoln here;
Let Chelmsford, Littleton, Carlisle,
Let Acton, Bedford, hither file—
Oh hither file, and plainly see
Out of a wound leap Liberty.

Say, Woodman Aprill all in green,
Say, Robin Aprill hast thou seen
In all thy travel round the earth
Ever a morn of calmer birth?
But Morning's eye alone serene
Can gaze across yon village-green
To where the trooping British run
Through Lexington.

Good men in fustian, stand ye still;
The men in red come o'er the hill.
Lay down your arms, damned Rebels! cry
The men in red full haughtily.
But never a grounding gun is heard;
The men in fustian stand unstirred;
Dead calm, save maybe a wise bluebird
Puts in his little heavenly word.
O men in red! if ye but knew
The half as much as bluebirds do,
Now in this little tender calm
Each hand would out, and every palm
With patriot palm strike brotherhood's stroke
Or ere these lines of battle broke.

O men in red! if ye but knew
The least of the all that bluebirds do,
Now in this little godly calm
Yon voice might sing the Future's Psalm—

The Psalm of Love with the brotherly eyes
Who pardons and is very wise—
Yon voice that shouts, high-hoarse with ire,

Fire!

The red-coats fire, the homespuns fall:
The homespuns' anxious voices call,
Brother, art hurt? and *Where hit, John?*
And, *Wipe this blood,* and *Men, come on,*
And, *Neighbor, do but lift my head,*
And *Who is wounded?* *Who is dead?*
Seven are killed. My God! my God!
Seven lie dead on the village sod.
Two Harringtons, Parker, Hadley, Brown,
Monroe and Porter,—these are down.
Nay, look! Stout Harrington not yet dead!
He crooks his elbow, lifts his head;
He lies at the step of his own house-door;
He crawls and makes a path of gore.
The wife from the window hath seen, and rushed;
He hath reached the step, but the blood hath gushed;
He hath crawled to the step of his own house-door,
But his head hath dropped: he will crawl no more.
Clasp, Wife, and kiss, and lift the head:
Harrington lies at his doorstep dead.

But, O ye Six that round him lay
And bloodied up that April day!
As Harrington fell, ye likewise fell—
At the door of the House wherein ye dwell;
As Harrington came, ye likewise came
And died at the door of your House of Fame.

Go by, old Field of Freedom's hopes and fears;
Go by, old Field of Brothers' hate and tears:
Behold! yon home of Brothers' Love appears

Set in the burnished silver of July,
 On Schuylkill wrought as in old broidery
 Clapsed hands upon a shining baldric lie,
 New Hampshire, Georgia, and the mighty ten
 That lie between, have heard the huge-nibbed pen
 Of Jefferson tell the rights of man to men.
 They sit in the reverend Hall: *Shall we declare?*
 Floats round about the anxious-quivering air
 'Twixt narrow Schuylkill and broad Delaware.
 Already, Land! thou *hast* declared: 'tis done.
 Ran ever clearer speech than that did run
 When the sweet Seven died at Lexington?
 Can'st legibler write than Concord's large-stroked Act,
 Or when at Bunker Hill the clubbed guns cracked?
 Hast ink more true than blood, or pen than fact?
 Nay, as the poet mad with heavenly fires
 Flings men his song white-hot, then back retires,
 Cools heart, broods o'er the song again, inquires,
Why did I this, why that? and slowly draws
 From Art's unconscious act Art's conscious laws;
 So, Freedom, writ, declares her writing's cause.
 All question vain, all chill foreboding vain.
 Adams, ablaze with faith, is hot and fain;
 And he, straight-fibred Soul of mighty grain,
 Deep-rooted Washington, afire, serene—
 Tall Bush that burns, yet keeps its substance green—
 Sends daily word, of import calm yet keen,
 Warm from the front of battle, till the fire
 Wraps opposition in and flames yet higher,
 And Doubt's thin tissues flash where Hope's aspire;
 And, *Ay, declare*, and ever strenuous *Ay*
 Falls from the Twelve, and Time and Nature cry
 Consent with kindred burnings of July;
 And delegate Dead from each past age and race,
 Viewless to man, in large procession pace

Downward athwart each set and steadfast face,
Responding *Ay* in many tongues; and lo!
Manhood and Faith and Self and Love and Woe
And Art and Brotherhood and Learning go
Rearward the files of dead, and softly say
Their saintly *Ay*, and softly pass away
By airy exits of that ample day.

Now fall the chill reactionary snows
Of man's defect, and every wind that blows
Keeps back the Spring of Freedom's perfect Rose.
Now naked feet with crimson fleck the ways,
And Heaven is stained with flags that mutinies raise,
And Arnold-spotted move the creeping days.

Long do the eyes that look from Heaven see
Time smoke, as in the spring the mulberry tree,
With buds of battles opening fitfully,
Till Yorktown's winking vapors slowly fade,
And Time's full top casts down a pleasant shade
Where Freedom lies unarmed and unafraid.

Master, ever faster fly
Now the vivid seasons by;
Now the glittering Western land
Twins the day-lit Eastern Strand;
Now white Freedom's sea-bird wing
Roams the Sea of Everything;
Now the freemen to and fro
Bind the tyrant sand and snow,
Snatching Death's hot bolt ere hurled,
Flash new Life about the world,
Sun the secrets of the hills,
Shame the gods' slow-grinding mills,
Prison Yesterday in Print,
Read To-morrow's weather-hint,

Haste before the halting Time,
Try new virtue and new crime,
Mould new faiths, devise new creeds,
Run each road that frontward leads,
Driven by an Onward-ache,
Scorning souls that circles make.
Now, O Sin! O Love's lost Shame!
Burns the land with redder flame:
North in line and South in line
Yell the charge and spring the mine.
Heartstrong South would have his way,
Headstrong North hath said him nay:
O strong Heart, strong Brain, beware!
Hear a Song from out the air:

I.

“Lists all white and blue in the skies;
And the people hurried amain
To the Tournament under the ladies' eyes
Where jousted Heart and Brain.

II.

“*Blow, herald, blow!* There entered Heart,
A youth in crimson and gold.
Blow, herald, blow! Brain stood apart,
Steel-armored, glittering, cold.

III.

“Heart's palfray caracoled gayly round,
Heart tra-li-raed merrily;
But Brain sat still, with never a sound—
Full cynical-calm was he.

IV.

“ Heart’s helmet-crest bore favors three
From his lady’s white hand caught;
Brain’s casque was bare as Fact—not he
Or favor gave or sought.

V.

“ *Blow, herald, blow!* Heart shot a glance
To catch his lady’s eye;
But Brain looked straight a-front, his lance
To aim more faithfully.

VI.

“ They charged, they struck; both fell, both bled;
Brain rose again, ungloved;
Heart fainting smiled, and softly said,
My love to my Beloved.”

Heart and Brain! no more be twain;
Throb and think, one flesh again!
Lo! they weep, they turn, they run;
Lo! they kiss: Love, thou art one!

Now the Land, with drying tears,
Counts him up his flocks of years,
“ See,” he says, “ my substance grows;
Hundred-flocked my Herdsman goes,
Hundred-flocked my Herdsman stands

On the Past's broad meadow-lands,
Come from where ye mildly graze,
Black herds, white herds, nights and days.
Drive them homeward, Herdsman Time,
From the meadows of the Prime:
I will feast my house, and rest.
Neighbor East, come over West;
Pledge me in good wine and words
While I count my hundred herds,
Sum the substance of my Past
From the first unto the last,
Chanting o'er the generous brim
Cloudy memories yet more dim,
Ghostly rhymes of Norsemen pale
Staring by old Björne's sail,
Strains more noble of that night
Worn Columbus saw his Light,
Psalms of still more heavenly tone,
How the Mayflower tossed alone,
Olden tale and 'later song
Of the Patriot's love and wrong,
Grandsire's ballad, nurse's hymn—
Chanting o'er the sparkling brim
Till I shall from first to last
Sum the substance of my Past."

Then called the Artist's God from in the sky:
"This Time shall show by dream and mystery
The heart of all his matter to thine eye.
Son, study stars by looking down in streams,
Interpret that which is by that which seems,
And tell thy dreams in words which are but dreams.'

I.

The Master with His lucent hand
Pinched up the atom hills and plains
O'er all the moiety of land
The ocean-bounded West contains:
The dust lay dead upon the calm
And mighty middle of His palm.

II.

And lo! He wrought full tenderly,
And lo! He wrought with love and might,
And lo! He wrought a thing to see
Was marvel in His people's sight:
He wrought His image dead and small,
A nothing fashioned like an All.

III.

Then breathed He softly on the dead:
"Live Self!—thou part, yet none, of Me;
Dust, for humility," He said,
"And my warm breath for Charity.
Behold my latest work, thou Earth!
The Self of Man is taking birth."

IV.

Then, Land, tall Adam of the West,
Thou stood'st upon the springy sod,
Thy large eye ranging self-possest,

Thy limbs the limbs of God's young god,
Thy Passion murmuring *I will*—
Lord of the Lordship Good-and-Ill.

V.

O manful arms, of supple size
To clasp a world or a waist as well!
O manful eyes, to front the skies
Or look much pity down on hell!
O manful tongue, to work and sing,
And soothe a child and dare a king!

VI.

O wonder! Now thou sleep'st in pain,
Like as some dream thy soul did grieve:
God wounds thee, heals thee whole again,
And calls thee trembling to thine Eve.
Wide-armed, thou dropp'st on knightly knee:
Dear Love, Dear Freedom, go with me!

*

VII.

Then all the beasts before thee passed—
Beast War, Oppression, Murder, Lust,
False Art, False Faith, slow skulking last—
And out of Time's thick-rising dust
Thy Lord said, "Name them, tame them, Son;
Nor rest, nor rest, till thou hast done."

VIII.

Ah, name thou false, or tame thou wrong,
At heart let no man fear for thee: .

Thy Past sings ever Freedom's Song,
Thy Future's voice sounds wondrous free;
And Freedom is more large than Crime,
And Error is more small than Time.

IX.

Come, thou whole Self of Latter Man!
Come o'er thy realm of Good-and-Ill,
And do, thou Self that say'st *I can*,
And love, thou Self that say'st *I will*;
And prove and know Time's worst and best,
Thou tall young Adam of the West!



*A BALLAD OF TREES AND THE
MASTER*

*I*nto the woods my Master went,
Clean forspent, forspent.
Into the woods my Master came,
Forspent with love and shame.
But the olives they were not blind to Him,
The little gray leaves were kind to Him:
The thorn-tree had a mind to Him
When into the woods He came.

Out of the woods my Master went,
And He was well content.
Out of the woods my Master came,
Content with death and shame.
When Death and Shame would woo Him last.
From under the trees they drew Him last:
'Twas on a tree they slew Him—last
When out of the woods He came.

A FLORIDA SUNDAY

*F*rom cold Norse caves or buccaneer Southern seas
Oft come repenting tempests here to die;
Bewailing old-time wrecks and robberies,
They thrive to priestly pines with many a sigh,
Breathe salutary balms through lank-lock'd hair
Of sick men's heads, and soon—this world outworn—
Sink into saintly heavens of stirless air,
Clean from confessional. One died, this morn,
And willed the world to wise Queen Tranquil: she,
Sweet sovereign Lady of all souls that bide
In contemplation, tames the too bright skies
Like that faint agate film, far down descried,
Restraining suns in sudden thoughtful eyes
Which flashed but now. Blest distillation rare
Of o'er-rank brightness filtered waterwise
Through all the earths in heaven—thou always fair,
Still virgin bride of e'er-creating thought—
Dream-worker, in whose dream the Future's wrought—
Healer of hurts, free balm for bitter wrongs—
Most silent mother of all sounding songs—
Thou that dissolvest hells to make thy heaven—
Thou tempest's heir, that keep'st no tempest leaven—
But after winds' and thunders' wide mischance
Dost brood, and better thine inheritance—
Thou privacy of space, where each grave Star
As in his own still chamber sits afar
To meditate, yet, by thy walls unpent,

Shines to his fellows o'er the firmament—
Oh! as thou liv'st in all this sky and sea
That likewise lovingly do live in thee,
So melt my soul in thee, and thine in me,
Divine Tranquillity!

Gray Pelican, poised where yon broad shallows shine,
Know'st thou, that finny foison all is mine
In the bag below thy beak—yet thine, not less?
For God, of His most gracious friendliness,
Hath wrought that every soul, this loving morn,
Into all things may be new-corporate born,
And each live whole in all: I sail with thee,
Thy Pelican's self is mine; yea, silver Sea,
In this large moment all thy fishes, ripples, bights,
Pale in-shore greens and distant blue delights,
White visionary sails, long reaches fair
By moon-horn'd strands that film the far-off air,
Bright sparkle-revelations, secret majesties,
Shells, wrecks and wealths, are mine; yea, Orange-trees,
That lift your small world-systems in the light,
Rich sets of round green heavens studded bright
With globes of fruit that like still planets shine,
Mine is your green-gold universe; yea, mine,
White slender Lighthouse fainting to the eye
That wait'st on yon keen cape-point wistfully,
Like to some maiden spirit pausing pale,
New-wing'd, yet fain to sail
Above the serene Gulf to where a bridegroom soul
Calls o'er the soft horizon—mine thy dole
Of shut undaring wings and wan desire—
Mine, too, thy later hope and heavenly fire
Of kindling expectation; yea, all sights,
All sounds, that make this morn—quick flights
Of pea-green paroquets 'twixt neighbor trees,

Like missives and sweet morning inquiries
From green to green, in green—live oaks' round heads,
Busy with jays for thoughts—grays, whites and reds
Of pranked woodpeckers that ne'er gossip out,
But alway tap at doors and gad about—
Robins and mocking-birds that all day long
Athwart straight sunshine weave cross-threads of song,
Shuttles of music—clouds of mosses gray
That rain me rains of pleasant thoughts alway
From a low sky of leaves—faint yearning psalms
Of endless metre breathing through the palms
That crowd and lean and gaze from off the shore
Ever for one that cometh nevermore—
Palmettos ranked, with childish spear-points set
Against no enemy—rich cones that fret
High roofs of temples shafted tall with pines—
Green, grateful mangroves where the sand-beach
shines—

Long lissome coast that in and outward swerves,
The grace of God made manifest in curves—
All riches, goods and braveries never told
Of earth, sun, air and heaven—now I hold
Your being in my being; I am ye,

And ye myself; yea, lastly, Thee,
God, whom my roads all reach, howe'er they run,
My Father, Friend, Belovèd, dear All-One,
Thee in my soul, my soul in Thee, I feel,
Self of my self. Lo, through my sense doth steal
Clear cognizance of all selves and qualities,
Of all existence that hath been or is,
Of all strange haps that men miscall of chance,
And all the works of tireless circumstance:
Each borders each, like mutual sea and shore,
Nor aught misfits his neighbor that's before,
Nor him that's after—nay, through this still air,

Out of the North come quarrels, and keen blare
Of challenge by the hot-breath'd parties blown;
Yet break they not this peace with alien tone,
Fray not my heart, nor fright me for my land,
—I hear from all-wards, allwise understand,
The great bird Purpose bears me 'twixt her wings,
And I am one with all the kinsmen things
That e'er my Father fathered. Oh, to me
All questions solve in this tranquillity:
E'en this dark matter, once so dim, so drear,
Now shines upon my spirit heavenly-clear:
Thou, Father, without logic, tellest me
How this divine denial true may be,
—How *All's in each, yet every one of all*
Maintains his Self complete and several.



UNDER THE CEDARCROFT CHESTNUT

*T*rim set in ancient sward, his manful bole
Upbore his frontage largely toward the sky.
We could not dream but that he had a soul:
What virtue breathed from out his bravery!

We gazed o'erhead: far down our deepening eyes
Rained glammers from his green midsummer mass.
The worth and sum of all his centuries
Suffused his mighty shadow on the grass.

A Presence large, a grave and steadfast Form
Amid the leaves' light play and fantasy,
A calmness conquered out of many a storm,
A Manhood mastered by a chestnut-tree!

Then, while his monarch fingers downward held
The rugged burrs wherewith his state was rife,
A voice of large authoritative Eld
Seemed uttering quickly parables of life:

*How Life in truth was sharply set with ills;
A kernel cased in quarrels; yea, a sphere
Of stings, and hedge-hog-round of mortal quills,
How most men itched to eat too soon i' the year,*

*And took but wounds and worries for their pains,
Whereas the wise withheld their patient hands,
Nor plucked green pleasures till the sun and rains
And seasonable ripenings burst all bands*

And opened wide the liberal burrs of life.

There, O my Friend, beneath the chestnut bough,
Gazing on thee immersed in modern strife,
I framed a prayer of fervency—that thou,

In soul and stature larger than thy kind,

Still more to this strong Form might'st liken thee,
Till thy whole Self in every fibre find
The tranquil lordship of thy chestnut tree.

EVENING SONG

*L*ook off, dear Love, across the sallow sands,
And mark yon meeting of the sun and sea,
How long they kiss in sight of all the lands.
Ah! longer, longer, we.

Now in the sea's red vintage melts the sun,
As Egypt's pearl dissolved in rosy wine,
And Cleopatra night drinks all. 'Tis done,
Love, lay thine hand in mine.

Come forth, sweet stars, and comfort heaven's heart;
Glimmer, ye waves, round else unlighted sands.
O night! divorce our sun and sky apart
Never our lips, our hands.

A SUNRISE SONG'

*y*oung palmer sun, that to these shining sands
 Pourest thy pilgrim's tale, discoursing still
Thy silver passages of sacred lands,
 With news of Sepulchre and Dolorous Hill,

Can'st thou be he that, yester-sunset warm,
 Purple with Paynim rage and wrack desire,
Dashed ravening out of a dusty lair of Storm,
 Harried the west, and set the world on fire?

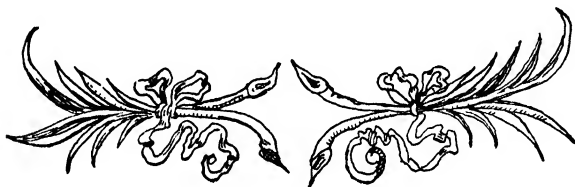
Hast thou perchance repented, Saracen Sun?
 Wilt warm the world with peace and dove-desire?
Or wilt thou, ere this very day be done,
 Blaze Saladin still, with unforgiving fire?

ON A PALMETTO

*T*hrough all that year-scarred agony of height
Unblest of bough or bloom, to where expands
His wandy circlet with his bladed bands
Dividing every wind, or loud or light,
To termless hymns of love and old despite,
Yon tall palmetto in the twilight stands,
Bare Dante of these purgatorial sands
That glimmer marginal to the monstrous night.
Comes him a Southwind from the scented vine,
It breathes of Beatrice through all his blades,
North, East or West, Guelph-wind or Ghibelline.
'Tis shredded into music down the shades;
All sea-breaths, land-breaths, systole, diastole,
Sway, minstrels of that grief-melodious Soul.

STRUGGLE

*m*y soul is like the oar that momentarily
Dies in a desperate stress beneath the wave,
Then glitters out again and sweeps the sea:
Each second I'm new-born from some new grave



CONTROL

C Hunger, Hunger, I will harness thee
And make thee harrow all my spirit's glebe.
Of old the blind bard Hervé sang so sweet
He made a wolf to plow his land.

TO J. D. H.

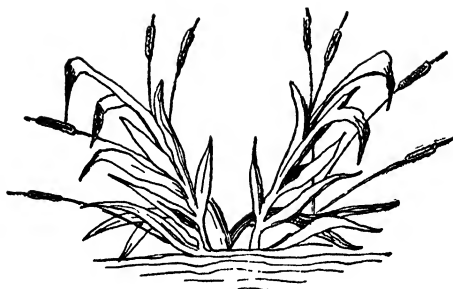
(KILLED AT SURREY C. H., OCTOBER, 1866.)

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*D*ear friend, forgive a wild lament
Insanely following thy flight.
I would not cumber thine ascent
Nor drag thee back into the night;

But the great sea-winds sigh with me,
The fair-faced stars seem wrinkled, old,
And I would that I might lie with thee
There in the grave so cold, so cold!

Grave walls are thick, I cannot see thee,
And the round skies are far and steep;
A-wild to quaff some cup of Lethe,
Pain is proud and scorns to weep.

My heart breaks if it cling about thee,
And still breaks, if far from thine.
O drear, drear death, to live without thee,
O sad life—to keep thee mine.



MARSH HYMNS

BETWEEN DAWN AND SUNRISE

Where silver pink, and had a soul,
Which soul were shy, which shyness might
A visible influence be, and roll
Through heaven and earth—'twere thou, O light.

O rhapsody of the wraith of red,
O blush but yet in prophecy,
O sun-hint that hath overspread
Sky, marsh, my soul, and yonder sail.

THOU AND I

So one in heart and thought, I trow,
That thou might'st press the strings and I might draw the
 bow
And both would meet in music sweet,
Thou and I, I trow.



THE HARD TIMES IN ELFLAND

A STORY OF CHRISTMAS EVE

Strange that the termagant winds should scold
The Christmas Eve so bitterly!
But Wife, and Harry the four-year-old,
Big Charley, Nimblewits, and I,

Blithe as the wind was bitter, drew
More frontward of the mighty fire,
Where wise Newfoundland Fan foreknew
The heaven that Christian dogs desire—

Stretched o'er the rug, serene and grave,
Huge nose on heavy paws reclined,
With never a drowning boy to save,
And warmth of body and peace of mind.

And, as our happy circle sat,
The fire well capp'd the company:
In grave debate or careless chat,
A right good fellow, mingled he:

He seemed as one of us to sit,
And talked of things above, below,
With flames more winsome than our wit,
And coals that burned like love aglow.

While thus our rippling discourse rolled
Smooth down the channel of the night,
We spoke of Time: thereat, one told
A parable of the Seasons' flight.

"Time was a Shepherd with four sheep,
In a certain Field he long abode,
He stood by the bars, and his flock bade leap
One at a time to the Common Road.

"And first there leapt, like bird on wing,
A lissome Lamb that played in the air.
I heard the Shepherd call him *Spring*:
Oh, large-eyed, fresh and snowy fair

"He skipped the flowering Highway fast,
Hurried the hedgerows green and white,
Set maids and men a-yearning, passed
The Bend, and gamboll'd out of sight.

"And next marched forth a matron Ewe
(While Time took down a bar for her),
Udder'd so large 'twas much ado
E'en then to clear the barrier.

"Full softly shone^{*} her silken fleece
What stately time she paced along:
Each heartsome hoof-stroke wrought increase
Of sunlight, substance, seedling, song,

"In flower, in fruit, in field, in bird,
Till the great globe, rich fleck'd and pied,
Like some large peach half pinkly furred,
Turned to the sun a glowing side

" And hung in the heavenly orchard, bright,
None-such, complete.

Then, while the Ewe
Slow passed the Bend, a blur of light,
The Shepherd's face in sadness grew:

' Summer! ' he said, as one would say.
A sigh in syllables. So, in haste
(For shame of Summer's long delay,
Yet gazing still what way she paced),

" He summoned Autumn, slanting down
The second bar. Thereover strode
A Wether, fleeced in burning brown,
And largely loitered down the Road.

" Far as the farmers sight his shape
Majestic moving o'er the way,
All cry *To harvest*, crush the grape,
And haul the corn and house the hay,

" Till presently, no man can say
(So brown the woods that line that end)
If yet the brown-fleeced Wether may,
Or not, have passed beyond the Bend.

" Now turn I towards the Shepherd: lo,
An agéd Ram, flapp'd, gnarly, horn'd,
With bones that crackle o'er the snow,
Rheum'd, wind-gall'd, rag-fleec'd, burr'd and thorn'd

" Time takes the third bar off for him,
He totters down the windy lane.
'Tis Winter, still: the Bend lies dim.
O Lamb, would thou would'st leap again!"

Those seasons out, we talked of these:
And I (with inward purpose sly
To shield my purse from Christmas trees
And stockings and wild robbery

When Hal and Nimblewits invade
My cash in Santa Claus's name)
In full the hard, hard times surveyed;
Denounced all waste as crime and shame,

Hinted that "waste" might be a term
Including skates, velocipedes,
Kites, marbles, soldiers, towers infirm,
Bows, arrows, cannon, Indian reeds,

Cap-pistols, drums, mechanic toys,
And all th' infernal host of horns
Whereby to strenuous hells of noise
Are turned the blessed Christmas morns;

Thus, roused—those horns!—to sacred rage,
I rose, forefinger high in air,
When Harry cried (*some* war to wage),
"Papa, is hard times ev'rywhere?"

"Maybe in Santa Claus's land
It isn't hard times none at all!"
Now, blessed Vision! to my hand
Most pat, a marvel strange did fall.

Scarce had my Harry ceased, when "Look!"
He cried, leapt up in wild alarm,
Ran to my Comrade, shelter took
Beneath the startled mother's arm.

And so was still: what time we saw
A foot hang down the fireplace! Then,
With painful scrambling scratched and raw,
Two hands that seemed like hands of men

Eased down two legs and a body through
The blazing fire, and forth there came
Before our wide and wondering view
A figure shrinking half with shame,

And half with weakness. "Sir," I said,
—But with a mien of dignity
The seedy stranger raised his head:
"My friends, I'm Santa Claus," said he.

But oh, how changed! That rotund face
The new moon rivall'd, pale and thin;
Where once was cheek, now empty space;
Whate'er stood out, did now stand in.

His piteous legs scarce propped him up:
His arms mere sickles seemed to be:
But most o'erflowed our sorrow's cup
When that we saw—or did not see—

His belly: we remembered how
It shook like a bowl of jelly fine:
An earthquake could not shake it now;
He *had* no belly—not a sign.

"Yes, yes, old friends, you well may stare:
I *have* seen better days," he said:
"But now, with shrinkage, loss and care,
Your Santa Claus scarce owns his head.

“ We’ve had such hard, hard times this year
For goblins! Never knew the like.
All Elfland’s mortgaged! And we fear
The gnomes are just about to strike.

“ I once was rich, and round, and hale,
The whole world called me jolly brick;
But listen to a piteous tale.
Young Harry,—Santa Claus is sick!

“ ’Twas thus: a smooth-tongued railroad man
Comes to my house and talks to me:
‘ I’ve got,’ says he, ‘ *a little plan*
That suits this nineteenth century.

“ ‘ *Instead of driving, as you do,*
Six reindeer slow from house to house,
Let’s build a Grand Trunk Railway through
From here to earth’s last terminus.

“ ‘ *We’ll touch at every chimney-top*
(An Elevated Track, of course),
Then, as we whisk you by, you’ll drop
Each package down: just think, the force

“ ‘ *You’ll save, the time!—Besides, we’ll make*
Our millions: look you, soon we will
Compete for freights—and then we’ll take
Dame Fortune’s bales of good and ill

“ ‘ *(Why, she’s the biggest shipper, sir,*
That e’er did business in this world!):
Then Death, that ceaseless Traveller,
Shall on his rounds by us be whirled.

*“ ‘ When ghosts return to walk with men,
We’ll bring ’em cheap by steam, and fast:
We’ll run a Branch to heaven! and then
We’ll riot, man; for then, at last*

*“ ‘ We’ll make with heaven a contract fair
To call, each hour, from town to town,
And carry the dead folks’ souls up there,
And bring the unborn babies down!’*

*“ The plan seemed fair: I gave him cash,
Nay, every penny I could raise.
My wife e’er cried, ‘ ’Tis rash, ’tis rash:’
How could I know the stock-thief’s ways?*

*“ But soon I learned full well, poor fool!
My woes began, that wretched day.
The President plied me like a tool.
In lawyer’s fees, and rights of way,*

*“ Injunctions, leases, charters, I
Was meshed as in a mighty maze.
The stock ran low, the talk ran high:
Then quickly flamed the final blaze.*

*“ With never an inch of track—’tis true!
The debts were large . . . the oft-told tale.
The President rolled in splendor new
—He bought my silver at the sale.*

*“ Yes, sold me out: we’ve moved away.
I’ve had to give up everything.
My reindeer, even, whom I . . . pray,
Excuse me” . . . here, o’er-sorrowing,*

Poor Santa Claus burst into tears,
Then calmed again: "my reindeer fleet,
I gave them up: on foot, my dears,
I now must plod through snow and sleet.

"Retrenchment rules in Elfland, now;
Yes, every luxury is cut off.
—Which, by the way, reminds me how
I caught this dreadful hacking cough:

"I cut off the tail of my Ulster furred
To make young Kris a coat of state.
That very night the storm occurred!
Thus we become the sport of Fate.

"For I was out till after one,
Surveying chimney-tops and roofs,
And planning how it could be done
Without my reindeers' bouncing hoofs.

"*'My dear,' says Mrs. Claus, that night,
(A most superior woman shel)
'It never, never can be right
That you, deep-sunk in poverty,*

"*'This year should leave your poor old bed,
And trot about, bent down with toys
(There's Kris a-crying now for bread!)
To give to other people's boys.*

"*'Since you've been out, the news arrives
The Elfs' Insurance Company's gone.
Ah, Claus, those premiums! Now, our lives
Depend on yours: thus griefs go on.*

“ *And even while you’re thus harassed,
I do believe, if out you went,
You’d go, in spite of all that’s passed,
To the children of that President!* ”

“ Oh, Charley, Harry, Nimblewits,
These eyes, that night, ne’er slept a wink.
My path seemed honeycombed with pits.
Naught could I do but think and think.

“ But, with the day, my courage rose.
Ne’er shall my boys, *my* boys (I cried),
When Christmas morns their eyes uncloze,
Find empty stockings gaping wide!

“ Then hewed and whacked and whittled I;
The wife, the girls and Kris took fire;
They spun, sewed, cut,—till by and by
We made, at home, my pack entire! ”

(He handed me a bundle, here.)

“ Now, hoist me up: there, gently: quick!
Dear boys, *don’t* look for much this year:
Remember, Santa Claus is sick! ”

SONG FOR "THE JACQUERIE"

BETRAYAL.

*T*he sun has kissed the violet sea,
And burned the violet to a rose.
O Sea! would'st thou not better be
Mere violet still? Who knows? who knows?
Well hides the violet in the wood:
The dead leaf wrinkles her a hood,
And winter's ill is violet's good;
But the bold glory of the rose,
It quickly comes and quickly goes—
Red petals whirling in white snows,
Ah mel!

The sun has burnt the rose-red sea:
The rose is turned to ashes gray.
O Sea, O Sea, might'st thou but be
The violet thou hast been to-day!
The sun is brave, the sun is bright,
The sun is lord of love and light;
But after him it cometh night.
Dim anguish of the lonesome dark!—
Once a girl's body, stiff and stark,
Was laid in a tomb without a mark,
Ah mel!

SONG FOR "THE JACQUERIE"
THE HOUND

*T*he hound was cuffed, the hound was kicked,
O' the ears was cropped, o' the tail was nicked,
(*All.*) Oo-hoo-o, howled the hound.
The hound into his kennel crept;
He rarely wept, he never slept.
His mouth he always open kept
Licking his bitter wound,
The hound,
(*All.*) "U-lu-lo," *howled the hound.*

A star upon his kennel shone
That showed the hound a meat-bare bone.
(*All.*) Oh, hungry was the hound!
The hound had but a churlish wit.
He seized the bone, he crunched, he bit.
"An thou wert Master, I had slit
Thy throat with a huge wound,"
Quo' hound.
(*All.*) Oh, angry was the hound.

The star in castle-window shone,
The Master lay abed, alone.
(*All.*) "Oh ho, why not?" quo' hound.
He leapt, he seized the throat, he tore
The Master, head from neck, to floor,
And rolled the head i' the kennel door,
And fled and salved his wound,
Good hound!
(*All.*) "U-lu-lo," *howled the hound.*

STRANGE JOKES

Well: Death is a huge omnivorous Toad
Grim squatting on a twilight road.
He catcheth all that Circumstance
Hath tossed to him.
He curseth all who upward glance,
As lost to him.

Once in a whimsey mood he sat
And talked of life, in proverbs pat,
To Eve in Eden,—“Death, on Life”—
As if he knew!
And so he toadied Adam’s wife
There, in the dew.

O dainty dew, O morning dew
That gleamed in the world’s first dawn, did you
And the sweet grass and manful oaks
Give lair and rest
To him who toadwise sits and croaks
His death-behest?

Who fears the hungry Toad? Not I!
He but unfetters me to fly.
The German still, when one is dead,
Cries out “Der Tod!”
But, pilgrims, Christ will walk ahead
And clear the road.

NIRVĀNA

*T*hrough seas of dreams and seas of phantasies,
Through seas of solitudes and vacancies,
And through my Self, the deepest of the seas,
I strive to thee, Nirvâna.

Oh long ago the billow-flow of sense,
Aroused by passion's windy vehemence,
Upbore me out of depths to heights intense,
But not to thee, Nirvâna.

By waves swept on, I learned to ride the waves.
I served my masters till I made them slaves.
I baffled Death by hiding in his graves,
His watery graves, Nirvâna.

And once I clomb a mountain's stony crown
And stood, and smiled no smile and frowned no frown,
Nor ate, nor drank, nor slept, nor faltered down,
Five days and nights, Nirvâna.

Sunrise and noon and sunset and strange night
And shadow of large clouds and faint starlight
And lonesome Terror stalking round the height,
I minded not, Nirvâna.

The silence ground my soul keen like a spear.
My bare thought, whetted as a sword, cut sheer
Through time and life and flesh and death, to clear
My way unto Nirvâna.

I slew gross bodies of old ethnic hates
That stirred long race-wars betwixt States and States.
I stood and scorned these foolish dead debates,
Calmly, calmly, Nirvâna.

I smote away the filmy base of Caste.
I thrust through antique blood and riches vast,
And all big claims of the pretentious Past
That hindered my Nirvâna.

Then all fair types, of form and sound and hue,
Up-floated round my sense and charmed anew.
—I waved them back into the void blue:
I love them not, Nirvâna.

And all outrageous ugliness of time,
Excess and Blasphemy and squinting Crime
Beset me, but I kept my calm sublime:
I hate them not, Nirvâna.

High on the topmost thrilling of the surge
I saw, afar, two hosts to battle urge.
The widows of the victors sang a dirge,
But I wept not, Nirvâna.

I saw two lovers sitting on a star.
He kissed her lip, she kissed his battle-scar.
They quarrelled soon, and went two ways, afar.
O Life! I laughed, Nirvâna.

And never a king but had some king above,
And never a law to right the wrongs of Love,
And ever a fangèd snake beneath a dove,
Saw I on earth, Nirvâna.

But I, with kingship over kings, am free.
I love not, hate not: right and wrong agree:
And fangs of snakes and lures of doves to me
Are vain, are vain, Nirvâna.

So by mine inner contemplation long,
By thoughts that need no speech nor oath nor song,
My spirit soars above the motley throng
Of days and nights, Nirvâna.

O Suns, O Rains, O Day and Night, O Chance,
O Time besprent with seven-hued circumstance,
I float above ye all into the trance
That draws me nigh Nirvâna.

Gods of small worlds, ye little Deities
Of humble Heavens under my large skies,
And Governor-Spirits, all, I rise, I rise,
I rise into Nirvâna.

The storms of Self below me rage and die.
On the still bosom of mine ecstasy,
A lotus on a lake of balm, I lie
Forever in Nirvâna.

NIGHT AND DAY

*T*he innocent, sweet Day is dead.
Dark Night hath slain her in her bed.
Oh, Moors are as fierce to kill as to wed!
—Put out the light, said he.

A sweeter light than ever rayed
From star of heaven or eye of maid
Has vanished in the unknown Shade.
—She's dead, she's dead, said he.

Now, in a wild, sad after-mood
The tawny Night sits still to brood
Upon the dawn-time when he wooed.
—I would she lived, said he.

Star-memories of happier times,
Of loving deeds and lovers' rhymes,
Throng forth in silvery pantomimes.
—Come back, O Day! said he.

RESURRECTION

Sometimes in morning sunlights by the river
Where in the early fall long grasses wave,
Light winds from over the moorland sink and shiver
And sigh as if just blown across a grave.

And then I pause and listen to this sighing.
I look with strange eyes on the well-known stream.
I hear wild birth-cries uttered by the dying.
I know men waking who appear to dream.

Then from the water-lilies slow uprises
The still vast face of all the life I know,
Changed now, and full of wonders and surprises,
With fire in eyes that once were glazed with snow.

Fair now the brows old Pain had erewhile wrinkled,
And peace and strength about the calm mouth dwell.
Clean of the ashes that Repentance sprinkled,
The meek head poises like a flower-bell.

All the old scars of wanton wars are vanished;
And what blue bruises grappling Sense had left
And sad remains of redder stains are banished,
And the dim blotch of heart-committed theft.

O still vast vision of transfigured features
Unvisited by secret crimes or dooms,
Remain, remain amid these water-creatures,
Stand, shine among yon water-lily blooms.

For eighteen centuries ripple down the river,
And windy times the stalks of empires wave,
—Let the winds come from the moor and sigh and shiver,
Fain, fain am I, O Christ, to pass the grave.

TO —

*T*he Day was dying; his breath
Wavered away in a hectic gleam;
And I said, If Life's a dream, and Death
And Love and all are dreams—I'll dream.

A mist came over the bay
Like as a dream would over an eye.
The mist was white and the dream was grey
And both contained a human cry,

The burthen whereof was "Love,"
And it filled both mist and dream with pain,
And the hills below and the skies above
Were touched and uttered it back again.

The mist broke: down the rift
A kind ray shot from a holy star.
Then my dream did waver and break and lift—
Through it, O Love, shone thy face, afar.

So Boyhood sets: comes Youth,
A painful night of mists and dreams;
That broods till Love's exquisite truth,
The star of a morn-clear manhood, beams.

THE DYING WORDS OF STONEWALL JACKSON

"Order A. P. Hill to prepare for battle."

"Tell Major Hawks to advance the Commissary train—"

"Let us cross the river and rest in the shade."

*T*he stars of Night contain the glittering Day
And rain his glory down with sweeter grace
Upon the dark World's grand, enchanted face—
All loth to turn away.

And so the Day, about to yield his breath,
Utters the stars unto the listening Night,
To stand for burning fare-thee-wells of light
Said on the verge of death.

O hero-life that lit us like the sun!
O hero-words that glittered like the stars
And stood and shone above the gloomy wars
When the hero-life was done!

The phantoms of a battle came to dwell
I' the fitful vision of his dying eyes—
Yet, even in battle-dreams, he sends supplies
To those he loved so well.

His army stands in battle-line arrayed:
His couriers fly: all's done: now God decide!
—And not till then saw he the Other Side
Or would accept the shade.

Thou Land whose sun is gone, thy stars remain!
Still shine the words that miniature his deeds.
O thrice-beloved, where'er thy great heart bleeds,
Solace hast thou for pain!



THE CENTENNIAL MEDITATION OF COLUMBIA

1776-1876

A CANTATA

MUSICAL AN-
NOTATIONS.
Full chorus:
sober, meas-
ured and yet
majestic
progressions
of chords.

From this hundred-terraced height,
Sight more large with nobler light
Rangers down yon towering years.
Humbler smiles and lordlier tears
Shine and fall, shine and fall,
While old voices rise and call
Yonder where the to-and-fro
Weltering of my Long-Ago
Moves about the moveless base
Far below my resting-place.

Chorus:
the sea and
the winds
mingling
their voices
with human
sighs.

Mayflower, Mayflower, slowly hither flying,
Trembling westward o'er yon balking sea,
Hearts within *Farewell dear England* sighing,
Winds without *But dear in vain* replying,
Gray-lipp'd waves about thee shouted, crying
"No! It shall not be!"

Quartette:
a meagre
and despair-
ing minor.

Jamestown, out of thee—
Plymouth, thee—thee, Albany—
Winter cries, *Ye freeze: away!*
Fever cries, *Ye burn: away!*
Hunger cries, *Ye starve: away!*
Vengeance cries, *Your graves shall stay!*

Then old Shapes and Masks of Things,
 Framed like Faiths or clothed like Kings,
 Ghosts of Goods once fleshed and fair,
 Grown foul Bads in alien air—
 War, and his most noisy lords,
 Tongued with lithe and poisoned swords—
 Error, Terror, Rage and Crime, -
 All in a windy night of time
 Cried to me from land and sea,
No! Thou shalt not be!

*Full chorus:
 return of
 the motive of
 the second
 movement,
 but worked
 up with
 greater
 fury, to the
 climax of
 the shout at
 the last line.*

Hark!
 Huguenots whispering *yea* in the dark,
 Puritans answering *yea* in the dark!
Yea like an arrow shot true to his mark,
 Darts through the tyrannous heart of Denial.
 Patience and Labor and solemn-souled Trial,
 Foiled, still beginning,
 Soiled, but not sinning,
 Toil through the stertorous death of the
 Night,
 Toil when wild brother-wars new-dark the
 Light,
 Toil, and forgive, and kiss o'er, and replight.

*A rapid
 and intense
 whisper-
 chorus.*

Now Praise to God's oft-granted grace,
 Now Praise to Man's undaunted face,
 Despite the land, despite the sea,
 I was: I am: and I shall be—
 How long, Good Angel, Oh, how long?
 Sing me from Heaven a man's own song!

*Chorus of
 jubilation,
 until the ap-
 peal of the
 last two
 lines intro-
 duces a tone
 of doubt: it
 then sinks to
 pianissimo.*

*Basso solo:
the good An-
gel replies:*

“ Long as thine Art shall love true love,
Long as thy Science truth shall know,
Long as thine Eagle harms no Dove,
Long as thy Law by law shall grow,
Long as thy God is God above,
Thy brother every man below,
So long, dear Land of all my love,
Thy name shall shine, thy fame shall glow! ”

*Full chorus:
jubilation
and
welcome.*

O Music, from this height of time my Word
unfold:
In thy large signals all men's hearts Man's
heart behold:
Mid-heaven unroll thy chords as friendly flags
unfurled,
And wave the world's best lover's welcome to
the world.



